

# KICK IT OVER

NO. 13 ♦ FALL 1985 ♦ "ANARCHY — PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE"

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cover photo by Alexandra Devon

**What's Inside!**

**ORGANIZING  
FOR THE 1990's**

•  
**Conversation  
with Murray  
Bookchin**

•  
**Interview  
with D.O.A.**

•  
**The Gay  
International**

•  
**Escape from  
University**

•  
**Veggie  
Vengeance**

•  
**Mind Theatre  
Comics**

Christopher Alice, Lynna Landstreet

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## Kick It Over September 1985

\$1.50 quarterly No. 13

Edited and Published by the Kick It Over Collective.  
All correspondence should be sent to:

**KICK IT OVER**  
P.O. Box 5811, Station A,  
Toronto, Ontario,  
Canada M5W 1P2



Christopher Alice, Alexandra Devon, Ron Hayley,  
Lynna Landstreet, Erinna Redfearne, Robyn Turney.

### Members at Large:

Eric Schryer, Kenn Quayle, Graham. Apologies to  
anyone we have forgotten to list.

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Country	subscriptions	libraries
Canada	\$7.50/6 issues	\$10.00
USA	\$7.50/6 issues (US)	\$10.00 (US)
Australia	\$7.50/6 issues (Aust.)	\$10.00 (Aust.)
UK	4 pounds/6 issues	6 pounds
corporations & govts.		\$100 (US funds)

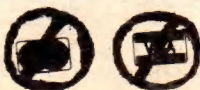
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hours of your time. Personal cheques O.K. Published  
4 times a year.

2nd Class mail reg. 5907. ISSN 0823-6526. Indexed in  
the Alternative Press Index. Articles not returned un-  
less accompanied by a SASE. We can NOT use US  
postage. If you want your article returned and are from  
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## In Memoriam

Unfortunately, we must begin this issue on a sombre  
note. Fredy Perlman, a long-time contributor to the  
libertarian movement, died of complications during  
heart surgery in Detroit on July 26. Fredy and his  
partner, Lorraine Perlman, were founders of Black and  
Red Press. Fredy was an incisive critic of contemporary  
society, and was the author of numerous books and  
pamphlets. Our heartfelt support to Lorraine and our  
friends at **Fifth Estate**. □



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## LINER NOTES .....

Here we are with another issue. Thanks to our anonymous donor. Thanks also to all the people who did volunteer labour putting this issue together. We know to you readers we often seem like a faceless mob. Next issue we plan to reveal ourselves — pictures, biographies and everything. (Conversely, it's not too late to fill out the readers' survey that appeared in #11.)

### Corrections for #12:

We apologize for the bad glossary. We'll never do it again. Secondly, we left out the captions for the pictures in Ron's *Anarchy for Beginners*. The first was a picture of the Mbuti people referred to in the text. The second (the funny little man with the beard) was Errico Malatesta, also mentioned in the article. Proudhon actually did *not* participate in the founding of the International Workingmen's Association.

The artwork in the centrefold was by Toronto artist Catherine Tamaro. Our apologies to Lynna for leaving out a graphic in her *You Smoke, I Choke* article, and our apologies to any magazines whom we listed incorrectly. **Cause and Effect**, so far as we know, is no longer publishing, the future of **Incite** is somewhat

uncertain, the **Peace Calendar** is now **Peace** magazine (with new offices at 10 Trinity Square, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1B1). **Reality Now's** new address is: P.O. Box 6326, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1P7. **Network's** editor has moved to Toronto and is starting a new publication, **Open Road** and **B.C. Blackout** have either folded or are taking an extended vacation, the **Toronto Clarion** is gone, and the **Anti-Authoritarian News Network** has been replaced by **Dissident News** and **Eko-Media** (Toronto).

And, finally we incorrectly stated that **Northern Sun Alliance News** had moved its offices. In reality, they can still be reached at: 1519 E. Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404.

**P.S.** The next person who writes us a letter addressed "Dear Sirs" will receive all future correspondence written in menstrual blood.

**P.P.S.** As you may have noticed, we have not changed our name to **Dare to Dream**, but we have received many other interesting suggestions such as: **Take It Over, Kick It Open, Think It Over, Kick the Bucket, Kick the Workers** and **Work It Over** (so we can sell it at leftist demos), and, finally, to show we're not speciesist, **Lick It Rover**. □

## Letters

This letter has been edited for publication:

Dear Friends,

I've had the pleasure (well as much as one can when dealing with the ills of society) of reading a few issues of **Kick It Over**, so I thought I'd write. I was particularly thrilled by #12, by all the articles — a good choice of topics and well-written. I particularly liked the intro. to anarchism, "Anarchy Means Responsibility", and "You Smoke, I Choke."

I found an interesting contradiction between the "Anarchy for Beginners" article and the "Is Marxism Racist?", in that one suggested anarchism occurred in various forms in different cultures, while the other stated that it was a European concept based on the European world-view. But I realize that many things can be used under the umbrella of anarchism, as is stated in "Anarchy for Beginners": "Anarchism exists in two forms: as instinctive rebellion against government, tyranny and the destruction of organic and more egalitarian forms of community and as a conscious political doctrine created by Western intellectuals over the last two centuries." Still I've often wondered whether one can find anarchist similarities in other cultures.

All our interpretations are bound to be tainted by our European world-view. A really good example of that is Colin Turnbull's classic study of the Mbuti pygmies. In his descriptions of power relationships, he focusses on the men and injects much of his Europeanism into his commentary. He hardly ever talks about the women and assumes they are doing nothing when he isn't allowed in on their private times together. He also spends chapters discussing men's hunting, smoking, joking, etc. and never talks about menstruation, birth or any other "women-things". These are just a few, feminist, examples, but the point is that I found the description (especially this distortion and just plain absence) so

biased that I still feel I know nothing about the pygmies. Anyway, that's one question I've wondered about (whether anarchism does "occur naturally" in other cultures) and I wondered about your views on it.

Nicole  
Ottawa

### The editors respond:

*Rather than attempt to answer this question (we don't presume to be experts), we invite our readers to send us articles and letters on the subject. We also think the question posed by Tammy from Ann Arbor bears answering as well. Write to us. Let us know what you think.*

## Request for an answer

I am interested in a comparison of 60's radical movements and present ones. What have we gained? How have we changed? It seems that the 70's just skipped by. An incubation period? How many young radicals today had parents active or semi-active in the 60's? Some children born in the 60's seem to have been brought up with some of that philosophy ingrained in them. How many?

I would like to see stressed occasionally what we have gained in the past 25 (or 50 or 100) years. I have found that in most political circles everyone is always stressing how much further we have to go. I see this is necessary, but it is also very depressing, and I would like to hear every now and then if we're doing any good at all. Some of us find it hard to maintain much hope for the future, despite the obvious progression that has been made.

Tammy Landstreet  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

continued on page 20



# DOES HIGHER EDUCATION CAUSE BRAIN DAMAGE?

by Alexandra Devon

When I entered my first year of university, I still liked to read. Ideas interested me and the prospect of changing the world seemed both possible and desirable. By the end of four years of studying English literature and history at a conservative, well-respected university, I found that I no longer had any interest in changing the world or even in reading much, with the possible exception of cookbooks. Within two months of graduating, I became a waitress at a natural foods restaurant where I was reasonably happy.

So complete had been my university "education" that I never stopped to question what had happened to my mind or the early stirrings of a sense of purpose in my life. It is only several years later after recovering my sense of self-worth and purpose that I reflect back on what happened to me in the lobotomizing process of "higher" education. This has, in turn, made me question the value of what we are offered as education as compared with the liberating force it can be, as my more recent experience with self-education and a free university have begun to show me.

I can now describe what was wrong with my university experience in "political" terms (authoritarianism, classism, competition, sexism, personal disempowerment and a lot of other things which don't fall as neatly into categories). At the time I was conscious of feeling miserable and out-of-place in a universe of European white, male ideas and art, without understanding why. I also felt it was my inability to cope that made me not appreciate the great "privilege" I was enduring. I kept telling myself that I should be able to write 21 term papers in three months and learn something in the process. And it was probably just coincidence that the lowest mark I ever got was in a course where I decided not to sleep with my history instructor. Gradually it dawned on me that other people (many of whom were deemed to be bright by accepted "standards") were experiencing similar pain.

A friend, who happened to be an intelligent and articulate student, confided to a sympathetic professor

that an essay would be late because of extenuating personal circumstances, the suicide of a close friend (also a student of the university). When the kind, fatherly professor returned the late essay, my friend was surprised to see a failing mark and shocked to read a page of comments which began by impugning his honesty, saying that anyone under that kind of stress could not have produced such a masterful essay. There was no attempt to show plagiarism (as there had been none), just a page of sneering comments ending with, "If you're really this talented perhaps you should write for a living."

When the situation was taken to a review board and the department head, the mark was raised to a "D" as a compromise since the paper was "after all" late. When pressed further by my enraged and demoralized friend, the department head replied that "he" had called a senior member of the department on the carpet (although no word of apology had been spoken to my friend) and he felt that "justice had been done". I go into this episode at length, but I know of at least half a dozen similar stories and with each retelling I am furnished with more. The formula is usually a self-confident, bright student encountering an insecure (often tenured), mediocre instructor.

My last year was one of the worst. After four years of being graded for class participation and always being terrified of being wrong or responding intuitively rather than intellectually, I found myself paralyzed in classes. This was compounded by a heavy work load which meant that there was rarely ever time to actually digest anything. I remember being in a seminar of twenty students surrounding one of the most highly-reputed scholars of the English department and all so in awe that there was rarely a comment or question, never mind discussion. There were exceptions but that's all they were. In between classes there was little time to develop ideas in a lively give and take. We all rushed off to do our privatized essays, which would later be appraised and graded in accordance with the bell curve which guarantees that even a class of Einsteins will fall into an artificial, preordained hierarchy — the marketing board approach. And to think what store we used to set by those judgements. The word of God could not have been more uplifting or damning to some of us. After a while, it was the only means of validation we had and then we were really at their mercy.

All this mental and emotional crippling might not have been so bad had we been able to think that even though this process was not boosting our self-confidence or preparing us for a job, at least it was helping to prepare us to try to change the world. By the end of my term, I couldn't remember, if I had ever known (coming as I had straight from my parent's home) what the world was all about or how I could possibly affect it.





The demand for "relevance" of the 60's, which I assumed, in my media-inspired ignorance, was a request for more courses in basket-weaving and camping, was more germane to my situation than I realized. My whole university experience served to alienate me more from a world I was trying to understand and find my place in. I had been interested in the history of ideas and in the philosophical worldviews of fiction, not for their own sakes, but because they mattered; they came out of the world and returned to and impacted on it. Somehow in the egotistical, competitive, overly-intellectualized setting of the university, I lost sight of everything but survival in an environment which I came increasingly to regard as hostile and alienating. Being a woman, I felt I faced certain disadvantages within the system. Had I been working class, gay, disabled or of anything other than Anglo-Saxon background, my alienation would have been even more complete.

Having read A.S. Neil's *Summerhill* in my adolescence, I had some sense that "education" didn't need to be so repugnant. I believed him when he stated that there was no such thing as a lazy child, only one who was uninspired. Yet, why was it that, at the end of four years of being in an environment devoted to learning, to pick up a book was a major undertaking and to question what I read required a phenomenal effort? In retrospect it seems clear. When all your questions have been formulated for you, through essay questions, test questions and the Socratic teaching method, and every book is a tension-filled challenge, requiring mastery and dissection to determine your "grade" and, therefore, self-worth, it seems hardly surprising that one's ability for self-direction and self-validation should be somewhat compromised.

The medium carried a heavy message in an atmosphere where technique was valued over substance and moral questions were just grist for the academic mill. There was no sense of learning together. The professor knew most and dispensed his knowledge to us lowly "undergraduates" (always pronounced with an affected English accent and a sneer). Since high grades were rationed students were pitted against one another in an artificially created scarcity situation.

Now that I'm out of that situation, I look back on that period with anger that four years of my life could have been squandered in such a destructive way. From what I read of universities now, it seems that little has changed for the better and may even be getting worse. The suicide rate on college campuses is still considerably higher than that of the general population, classes are getting larger, bell curves are being forced on unwilling professors and now it is the "captains of industry" who are crying out for "relevance" in the form of more and better genetic engineers, robotologists, nuclear physicists and the like. Government defence departments' demands for "relevance" are quietly answered by most major universities' willing acceptance of huge sums for defence-related research.

From time to time, one hears of students refusing to write exams or of alternative programs within univer-

sity settings. I am always happy to hear of these developments but I feel that the educational system as it exists now is really not reformable for those interested in a liberal education, in the best sense of the term.

To quote a Gandhian phrase, "As the end, so the means." To be empowered individuals who are able to understand and change the world, we must be in control of our whole process of enlightenment. This is not said with egotistical rejection of the past or what others have to teach us, but the emphasis must be on creating a morally-centred community which recognizes its place in the world and its obligation to foster a vital, harmonious existence amongst people, and with the rest of the natural world. If this is not our explicit goal and our process of education does not reflect it, not only will we not achieve intellectual clarity, we will continue to reproduce a destructive and alienating status quo. □





# "WRECKING THE PARTY WITH LOVE"

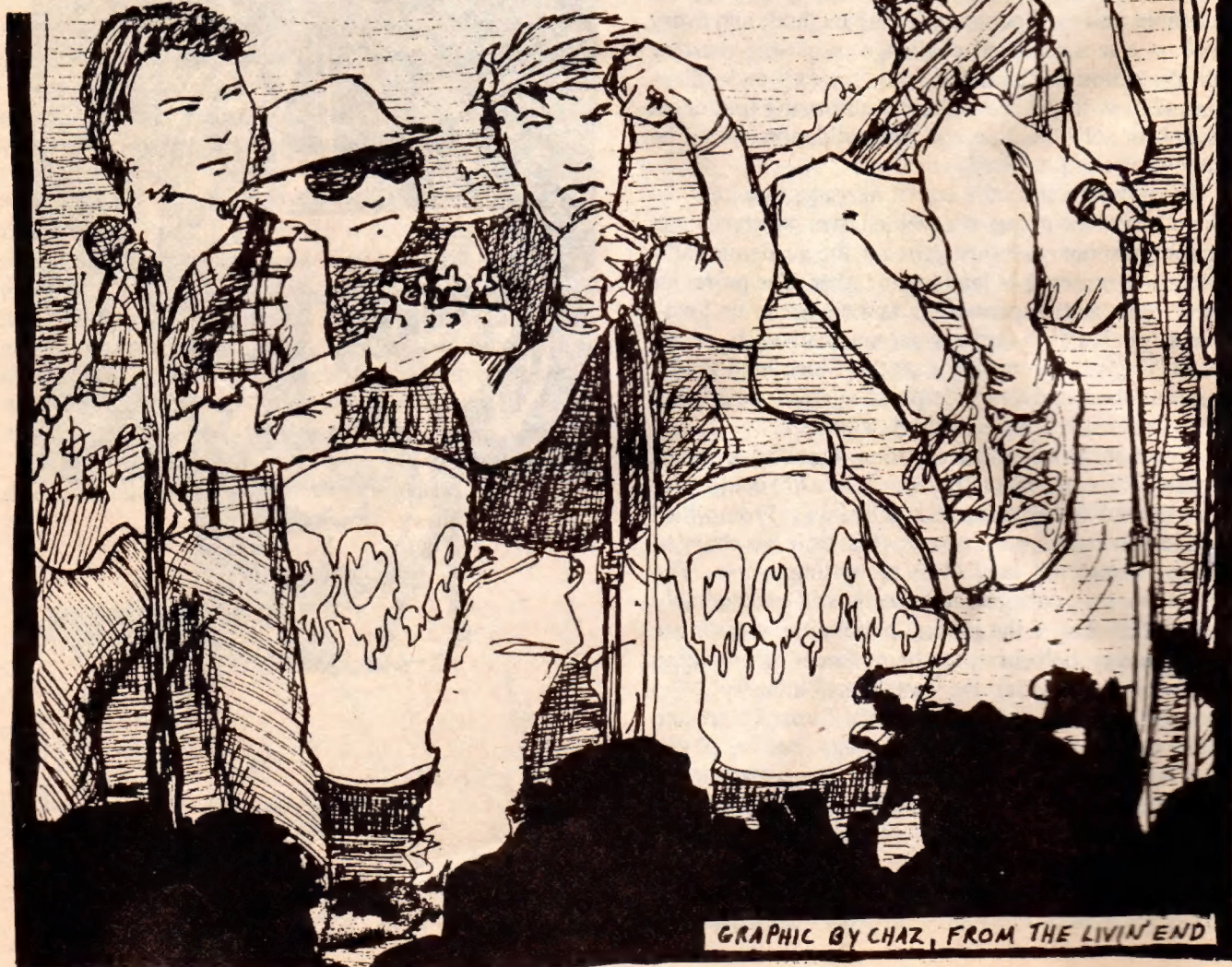
## An Interview with D.O.A.

by Lynna Landstreet

D.O.A. are one of Canada's most politically oriented punk bands, despite a reputation (perhaps undeserved) for being sexist, due primarily to a couple of songs with fairly ambiguous lyrics (i.e., is this parody or the real thing?). They've been particularly active in support work for the Vancouver Five, among other things. I saw the band on their recent tour in London, Ont. and in Toronto. At the Toronto show particularly, they made a lot of statements between songs (actually, they might have at the London gig, but the P.A. was so bad and the audience so loud that it was hard to make out anything they said), encouraging people to boycott South African beer, go to the Hiroshima Day demonstration, and not to be so rough in the front since women were being pushed back and they were afraid people were going to get hurt. (As a matter of fact, people **did** get hurt at that show; two people received cuts from irresponsible idiots stage-diving while wearing lots of studs, one so badly he had to have 15 stitches, and one stage-diver missed the

crowd and ended up in the hospital with a concussion.)

I interviewed singer Joey Keighley (a.k.a. Joey Shithead) and bass player Brian Goble (a.k.a. Wimpy Roy) in London, with Janice Maxwell of the now-defunct fanzine **The Livin' End** and Chaz Vincent of **Mind Theatre**. This interview didn't turn out too well, partly due to being conducted in a crowded room and partly to the fact that we didn't have a tape recorder and had to rely on Janice taking notes. Janice and I put the interview together as best we could from her notes and our memories (apologies to all concerned if we got anything wrong), but due to the small amount of material we ended up with and the lack of space in this





issue, we're just printing a few extracts from the London interview.

After the Toronto gig I talked to guitarist Dave Gregg. This interview turned out a lot better (and longer) because I had a tape recorder and there was only one other person present, Janice Green (not to be confused with Janice Maxwell), who also contributed some questions and comments.

**Janice Maxwell:** You know, your gigs are not a good place for women to be. Too many ditch-pigs in the audience, so women get hassled a lot.

**Joey:** Well, you know, we can't really control what goes on in the audience when we're up on stage.

**Lynna:** This might sound kind of hostile, but don't you think you encourage that to a certain extent by playing songs like "Let's Fuck"? (Janice and I had worn homemade "Let's not" T-shirts for the occasion, but as it turned out, they didn't play the song.)

**Joey:** It was intended as a satire on cock-rockers, but I guess it's easy for people to find it offensive, or even to be encouraged by it. Maybe my sense of humour, my sense of satire, is a little too refined for the general public, but to me it's blatantly obvious. All the songs have to be looked at together; by taking a song out of its context it can be seen the wrong way... A lot of bands perpetuate the macho image, and D.O.A. are sort of victims of that, it's just naturally assumed that we're the same.

**Lynna:** There are a lot of bands who call themselves anarchists, or at least put circle A's all over their records, and probably some of them know what it means and some of them don't, but you on the other hand seem to support a lot of anarchist causes and ideas, but I've never heard you call yourselves anarchists. Do you consider yourselves anarchists?

**Brian:** To me, anarchy means people taking responsibility for their own lives and creating a new world for themselves, which is a great idea and I support it, but the actual word "anarchy" has bad connotations because of people misconstruing it. People need some education before they go throwing around generic terms and easily misunderstood terms. Some people, however well-meaning, don't have the meaning of it clear with other people, although they may have it clear with themselves... I don't think extremist bands, like Crass, will really do much good, because they only reach people who are already converted, they don't actually convert anyone.

**Lynna:** Tonight you were trying to get the men in the audience to stop pushing the women around, to let the women participate more. Do you want to talk about that?

**Dave:** I see it all the time, I notice that the women want to participate, but they get pushed to the perimeter. I thought the way I put it tonight was actually pretty good, that if we're going to change anything, there can't be people on the fringe like that, whether it be women, or Blacks, or people with long hair, or people

with short hair, or whoever. You can't exclude people like that, everyone has to be able to participate. It seems to me that the point of women participating in dancing is an easy one to make, because it's a crime, you know, that this music is being interpreted by people as an excuse to be irresponsible, whereas the exact opposite was the idea. It's an opportunity to be responsible, and to create something that's different. I just look around, and I see that the police force is totally dominated by men, the army is dominated by men, politics is dominated by men, the judicial system is dominated by men, the work force is dominated by men, and this is what makes the world go round. And this punk rock business — well, "punk rock" is a joke to me, I just use that for lack of a better word — offered to me the opportunity to try and build something different. This is the foundation. We've got to start right here, right now, on the dance floor.

**TALK - ACTION = 0...**

**NOW MORE THAN EVER  
NOW MORE THAN EVER  
NOW MORE THAN EVER**

**Lynna:** We've got to straighten out our own subculture before we can hope to change society as a whole.

**Dave:** Yeah... But that was one of the things that appealed to me, about playing music, punk rock especially. When we started, there were no rules. It was a golden opportunity to create something that was actually different, because everyone knows that in this world, in this society, we're not even coming close to fulfilling what human potential is. We're missing it, totally! And there was this void in the arts world, in the rock world, because there was this huge, monstrous infrastructure that had built up, with bands making millions of dollars, and lifestyles of the rich and famous, and when I looked at it, it was totally devoid of anything emotional, anything really spiritual, which is what music really is. We, D.O.A., and lots of other bands sensed that and started making music that filled that gap. And this great opportunity was created. And, you know, it goes in cycles, and sometimes it's not so great. I've done gigs where, I'm serious, you could count the number of women in the audience on one hand! They're just not interested in coming out and subjecting themselves to a bunch of fucking guys beating their chests! And I don't blame them. I don't even particularly want to be at those gigs. But you've got to wade through that because everything goes in cycles, and it'll get better.

**Janice Green:** I think the bands can usually get the point across, though.

**Dave:** Well, we've been trying, but for a long time there I think we just kind of let it slide, we sort of shirked our responsibility, because you don't really



want to get up there and preach to people. I don't want to say "do this, do that, don't do this," but then it became apparent that people needed to be taken by the hand to a certain extent, and we have a conflict within the band as to how to approach this problem, so we just do the best we can.

**Lynna:** I think one reason a lot of women don't come to your gigs — I know it's the reason that a lot of my friends didn't — is that D.O.A. has a reputation for being really sexist.

**Dave:** Yeah, I know!



**Lynna:** Joey said when I talked to him last night that songs like "Let's Fuck" are supposed to be a parody of that kind of attitude, but that's not very clear, especially when you hear it in this all-male environment, from an all-male band, it's very easy to miss the joke, so that it can come across as no different from bands like AC/DC or Van Halen...

**Dave:** Well, I would shudder to think it came across as no different...

**Lynna:** Less different than it should be, though.

**Dave:** Yeah. Well, it took a lot of time, but we eventually realized that that song was doing more harm than good. There's a lot of people, men and women alike, that do appreciate the satire of that song, but there were more that didn't, so we stopped doing it. So who knows, maybe a couple of years down the road we'll start doing it again, but at this point we've sort of reached the point of diminishing returns on that song. Satire and parody are dangerous because you can be taken wrongly, but if you don't push things, nothing ever changes. You've got to push things past the point of what's safe, and people get offended. What can I do?

**Lynna:** One way to deal with it is just to make some kind of statement when you play it that reflects the intent of the song, so you alienate fewer people.

**Dave:** Yeah, we tried that. When we were over in Europe we got tons of flak, and that was really tough because we couldn't speak the language so we couldn't do the rap. And in North America when I used to see a male-dominated dance floor, either before or after we'd

play "Let's Fuck", I'd say "Hey, fellows, what's the deal? Do you all want to fuck each other? Why don't you let some of the women participate?" But that didn't really work, because it was a real popular song and one that we'd really go crazy on, so it would always bring out the most radical reaction, and then the women really would get pushed to the edges, because they don't want to get the elbows and the big boots and all that stuff. It's not just women! Fuck, man, I wouldn't go out on the dance floor in that shit! I think everyone realizes that the situation's out of control... But on the other hand, there's othing quite like being 16 years old. I was 16 years old once, and being a 16-year-old male you have this sense of indestructability which is really tough to beat, and you've got to take that into account. Those kids are going crazy and it feels great! I know it does because it felt great to me.

**Janice:** They're releasing a lot of pressure.

**Dave:** Yeah... But, obviously, I'm not 16 any more, and as a band we want to appeal to a larger group of people. It's all fine and dandy if a handful of the audience has a really good time, but I'd rather see the whole audience have a really good time.

**Lynna:** What you were saying earlier, about asking the men if they all wanted to fuck each other, there may be a lot more truth to that than people think...

**Dave:** Oh, there is!

**Lynna:** Because, you know, men in this society are not really allowed to touch each other or be physically affectionate with each other, because of these rigid heterosexual roles that everyone's forced into, so they devise all these ritualized excuses to touch each other, like playing football...

**Dave:** Yeah, that's sort of why I quit saying it, because there was a little too much truth in it. Because that's also a part of being a 16-year-old guy, you're going through puberty, and it's not as cut and dried as people would have you believe. Sexual roles are not black and white...

**Dave:** People ask us, "What's this 'Let's Wreck The Party' business all about?" Well, the people on the cover that are having dinner, with the chicken, that represents the status quo. And the status quo is a lie! Like people in the U.S. getting all patriotic and waving American flags, and thinking that somehow or other this is their birthright, that they deserve this lifestyle! Fuck you, man, *nobody* is doing *anything* to deserve this! Sure, lots of people work, everybody works. But the fact of the matter is that we're living off the blood and sweat of the Third World! And *that's* what keeps the status quo going! Sure, American ingenuity. But the ingenuity has been "How can we exploit these people, absolutely, to the max?" And what we're saying is, fuck, let's wreck it, let's trash it, let's kick over the applecart, because this is a lie! And we didn't burst into the room with machine guns, we just had our guitars, because we want to do it with art, with love. Because you can't — well, there is something to be said for fighting fire with fire, like the Vancouver Five, but we choose to fight fire with love.

**Lynna:** Like fighting fire with water.



**Dave:** Or fight fire with water, fight hate with love. Because if you fight hate with hate, you're going to waste your life hating. And so we're going to wreck the party with love, and with compassion.

**Lynna:** So, in the case of the Vancouver Five, you supported them as activists or as friends, even though you don't really agree with the methods they used?

**Dave:** Well, we certainly did. We raised money for

#### OUR WORLD

J. KEIGHLEY

IS THAT ALL YOU WANT  
IS THAT ALL YOU NEED  
LYIN' BACK AN' TAKIN' IT  
FROM THOSE WHO MADE YOU BLEED  
NOW THE PRESSURE'S ON  
IT'S GONNA MAKE YOU BEND  
WHAT YOU BELIEVE  
THINGS YOU MUST DEFEND

YOU MUST BE TIRED  
OF HANGIN' AROUND  
LETTIN' YOURSELF  
BE HELD DOWN  
COME ON GET UP  
GET UP AND SHOUT  
TIME TO WAKE UP

IT'S OUR WORLD. IT'S ALL WE NEED  
BREAK OUT OF A BAD DREAM  
IT'S OUR WORLD. IT'S ALL WE NEED

NOT JUST A CRY  
FROM THE WILDERNESS  
LET'S RIP AWAY  
ALL THE EMPTINESS  
BY HOLDING OUT  
TAKING COMMAND  
YOU'LL GET IT YET  
THE FUTURE'S AT HAND

them, and hopefully we raised people's consciousness about what they did. It's not what I choose to do, to resort to violence. But what we did, as artists, was to use their situation as a platform to talk about things, to talk about the fact that there's a real paradox here. These people used violence to achieve an end, and got no personal gain from it, they didn't make any money off of it or anything, and they get called terrorists and menaces to society, and end up spending the rest of their fucking lives in prison with murderers and rapists, who I don't imagine are very fun people to hang out with, and at the same time, we, as citizens of this country, are taxed, and the money goes to maintain a standing army, which is just a bunch of guys who have been cleared of all responsibility, and have a license to go out and "settle" things by force, and to go out and kill people if that's what they're told to do, and they can do that and that's O.K., they're not going to do any time for it!

**Lynna:** Yeah, there's a double standard, if you use violence with the government's permission, that's O.K., but if you use violence without the government's permission, you're a terrorist.

**Dave:** That's the word I was looking for, a double standard. And in the case of the Vancouver Five, there's another big double standard in terms of the judicial system. As far as I was concerned, their actions were not just against Litton or BC Hydro or Red Hot

Video in particular, but against a whole mentality, a whole insanity as I see it, that's consuming the world. And I think the judicial system is incapable of being impartial.

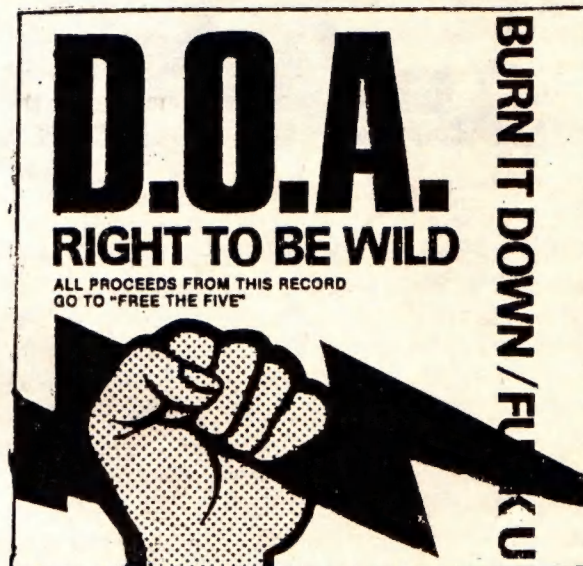
**Lynna:** Because they're part of that system.

**Dave:** They're a part of the system, and it's a joke, you know! If the justice system was truly impartial, instead of being just a wing of the government, they would go out and arrest the people at Litton, and they would arrest the people who run the army, and they would say, "You're going to go on trial for conspiracy to murder!" And I'd be right behind them, I'd say "Yeah, get these jerks out of here!"

**Lynna:** Not only is it a double standard, but it's the reverse of any kind of logical order. It's not O.K. to blow up a building to try and save people's lives, but it's O.K. to kill people for profit.

**Dave:** And that's the worst of it, that the justification for it all does just boil down to money. Money makes everything O.K. The one case of the Vancouver Five, the one involving Red Hot Video, I think that one is a little bit different. I think it's pretty cut and dried. I don't have any problem saying that that is a case of self defense, because the line you can draw between pornography and violence against women is pretty clear. Why should people sit around and wait to be assaulted or raped, when they can go out and actually do something about it, and change the world right now? It's self defense as far as I'm concerned.

**Lynna:** When you get into dealing with the porn issue, a lot of people will accuse you of being pro-censorship. You know, they say that if you burn a porn shop, or



even if you pour ink on porn magazines at your local corner store or "redecorate" advertising posters outside porn theatres, like I do sometimes, then that's censorship. What do you think of that argument?

**Dave:** Well, I'm no advocate of censorship, but I think that if women and men alike take a more aggressive stand against that kind of stuff, then it will fall into a more correct perspective in the realm of human experience. I mean, you can't deny that there is such a thing as erotica, that people like to look at each other's bodies.



That's just the way it is. But at the same time, it's so out of perspective. That's the real problem, not that it exists, but that it's gotten so blown out of proportion, because of man's ability to manipulate things. It's all Madison Avenue, you know, you make something into something that it's really not. I mean, really, the pictures of Madonna in *Playboy* — which by chance we've got a copy of in the van! (laughs) No, really, there's a story behind that! We bought it because they reviewed a D.O.A. album in that issue. And if that don't make you feel funny, nothing does! There we are, right in the lair of the beast, so to speak. But those mags, they're just pictures of women, but it's pretty obvious from the way they approach them, the things they write, and the way they get people to sit, or stand, or hang from a tree, or whatever they're doing, that there's a message in there that's subliminal, and it twists everything, and right now it's twisted so fucking far it's ridiculous! And that's why you get people reacting to it, and I say more power to them. . . I'd like to be able to look at a picture of a nude woman without a huge mountain of subconscious feelings in the back of my head. I'd like to be able to look at it and say "I like it" or "I don't like it" or whatever, just have it nice and



pure and simple, not this huge fucking monster that's been created!

**Lynna:** There's all these symbolic meanings in the imagery they use. . .

**Dave:** Yeah, with me, I get a bunch of subconscious information, and with other people, the subconscious information that they get might drive them to rape a woman. I mean, who knows how people react to this stuff?

**Janice:** In Windsor, there was this case, about a month ago, where this guy watched a TV show in which someone attacked a variety store clerk, raped her, and ran her over about four times with a car, and he watched this on TV one night and then went out and did it, to a woman in a variety store. He dumped her in a garbage can, but she lived, and it was exactly the same thing that he'd watched on TV.

**Dave:** That's a particularly graphic example. I think most of what you see is more diluted. It's the product of years and years of people getting fed information. There's one thing, getting back to music, which I feel separates D.O.A. from a lot of these metal bands. I feel they're really fucking irresponsible with the kind of

images they use. Young kids are real impressionable, and, just for the sake of selling records, to tie women up, to portray women as things that are to be dominated, to put out images of the devil, evil, all that stuff — you know it's satire, because if they were really evil, they wouldn't be making rock music, they'd be out killing people — but it's so cheap and so tacky and, to me so irresponsible. . . Who knows? I mean, you're going to reap what you sow, and we'll see, 10 or 15 years from now, how powerful the music of this generation really was. What are the kids who are listening to Motley Crue and all those other bands that are making bucks off the devil, what are those kids going to aspire to, when they're not 16 any more, when they're 35 and maybe they're married? What are they going to do with their lives?

**Lynna:** They'll probably be stockbrokers and beat up their wives.

**Dave:** Yeah, if they're lucky. If they're unlucky, they'll be unemployed and beat up their wives.

**Lynna:** What about the kids that are listening to D.O.A.? Maybe they'll end up where Gerry Hannah is.

**Dave:** Maybe. Or maybe they'll be stockbrokers who beat up their wives, you never know. But I do think that one thing that sets us apart is that we're trying to be responsible. We're trying to be crazy at the same time as being responsible. It's like trying to elevate the concept of human awareness to the point where you can have your cake and eat it too, you can go berserk, you can cut your hair like the fucking Statue of Liberty, you can do anything you want, and you can be cool too, you can be smart, and you can have a heart, and you can know where you fit in the world, participate, instead of being a follower. We try to create new concepts, to go beyond. . . What I would like to do is to try and redefine the role of artists in the world. I think that artists should run the world — well, not really, I don't think anyone should run the world, but I think that artists should take the bull by the horns, because, as far as I'm concerned, the cats that are in the White House, and Mulroney, and the guys in the Kremlin, they're acting like 4-year-olds. I mean, I went to the recruiting office when I was 13, and got all their brochures, because, as strange as it may seem, people can romanticize anything. They can romanticize joining the army, they can romanticize being a bank robber, they can romanticize being a murderer — anything! But I grew out of that. When I hit 17 or 18, I began to realize that there was no future in that. It's like an endless cycle. Someone's got to break the cycle. These cats, the politicians, they never grew up. They got sucked into thinking — well, I don't know what they got sucked into thinking, I can't figure it out! It's an obvious dead end. Especially with nuclear proliferation, it's a *total* dead end! You've got to be a child not to realize that. So that's why we've got to redefine the role of the artist. *Someone's* got to be responsible. . . That's why I dig art, and music, because they offer us an opportunity to break with these crazy cycles that people are on. People always say to me, "Well, there's nothing you can do," but I really disagree. The future's unwritten as far as I'm concerned. □



# MY DISILLUSIONMENT WITH IDEOLOGY

This may be the most important work I will ever do in my life. It may even be among the most worthwhile of human preoccupations. It is difficult, sometimes overwhelming and often terrifying. And I get no salary, no systematized recognition, minimal acknowledgement from my friends and no verification from the culture that I am doing anything other than goofing off.

In my inner search for me and my skeletons I run up against a whole system of taboos that discourages anything other than the refinement of intellectual ideals and outward appearances. Yet I can no longer accept those as true boundaries to constructive and revolutionary work.

For years now I have held onto Anarchist ideals like they were pots of gold at the end of the rainbow. I have continually honed my ideas about all the should-be's for humanity — should be more individual autonomy, should be non-hierarchy, should be more support and encouragement, should be more trust in the basic good in humanity, should be spontaneity, should be non-possessiveness, and finally, should be more reflection and the continuation of the search for higher ideals.

To some degree I manifest all of these in my own

by Courage Pandora

behavior. But often I have fooled myself that I'm all the way there. I have confused my ability to hold a sincere opinion about current social concerns with my identity, with whom I am. I have used my most noble ideals to justify my reason for existence rather than facing up to my fear of my own inadequacies.

My work is now to listen to my inner self, to what my gut says. My painful question is, "Do I have the right to spread ideals that I have not yet manifested fully within myself?" Because if I am not already a living example of what I want to teach I can no longer live with my own hypocrisy.

I want everything individual to be autonomous. Yet am I autonomous? Not fully. I still depend on outside sources for the validity of my existence, for approval, for how I should act, for how I should think. I still to some degree depend on these outside "authorities" even though they are anarchist and feminist authorities. I still allow these forces to have a great deal of power over my life, I still project too much infallibility onto these forces, and I still let them override my inner feelings sometimes.

For some time my sense of purpose was derived from causes. Yet as important as these causes were, I was not acting on them in an autonomous way because I had trouble valuing myself apart from and without the feeling that I was o.k. because I am involved in something noble. I was a true martyr, living for and through causes because I felt I lacked something as an ordinary human being. That doesn't mean I now denigrate anyone who organizes and educates around social improvement on any front. But I now have a fuller concept of myself as a full person in addition to the work I do to improve my surroundings. And I'm a lot less burned-out these days.

I want every individual to be non-hierarchical. Am I fully non-hierarchical? At times I have convinced myself I am. I have certainly put a lot of effort into it. But when I look closely at myself I find I still make value judgements between this person and that, between people, plants and animals, between those who share my ideas and those who don't, between this person's physical appearance and that person's, between women and men, between poor and middle class, between cultures, between personalities and between people's experiences. I have rationalized some of it on the basis of being natural, politically necessary or on being right instead of wrong. But it all comes down to what I feel to be superior or inferior to me.

Am I supportive? Sometimes. But the level of my support often correlates to the things I value and acknowledge on my hierarchical scale. And only when I expect it to be reciprocated. Sometimes I don't expect it to be reciprocated because I don't think I deserve it. And when I think I don't deserve it, I think the other person doesn't either.

Am I trusting? Not when it comes down to it. I still





carry prejudices against a large chunk of humanity for being apathetic or stupid or naive. In other words I haven't yet arrived at a complete trust in the basic good of the human race. I don't think I even trust myself yet. I still worry about whether I have some strange inner compulsion to hurt others in some way, even when my better sense tells me it's not true.

Am I spontaneous? Rarely. Instead of trusting my own intuition to freely express myself, I launch big battles within about what's right and proper and correct to do instead. When I feel like giggling and joking I tell myself to be more sober and serious. When I'm bored at a meeting I tell myself I have no right to be. When I feel depressed I argue that my problems are inconsequential compared to all the starvation and tyranny out there. When I feel like smoking or eating meat I accuse myself of being bad and disgusting. When I would rather make love than go to a demonstration I feel guilty. I spend all day fighting myself off and training myself to be rigid and restrained. I am my own cop. And it doesn't help that I listen to other cops out there, both in uniforms and out who are always trying to make me feel guilty, including some of the more rigid and morally elitist elements of the anarchist movement.

Am I non-possessive? I used to think so. In truth I have often repressed hurt feelings and have seen others repress hurt feelings because we think these are wrong, immature and unacceptable. The times I have had the most success with open relationships have been the times when I wanted shallow, uncommitted relationships, when I felt the most secure and able to be dependent on another, and once because I had more power over the relationship than the other person. At this point being non-monogamous requires that I have even deeper commitment and trust than in an exclusive relationship. I am now realizing that my need for deep commitment in relationships is not nearly as immature as my earlier denial of that fact. The truth is that my

self-esteem is far below the level it needs to be before I can be genuinely content in open, no-expectation relationships. Another truth is that it's not fair to punish myself or others for this lack of self-esteem by forcing myself to go through pain just because it's the ideal and the correct anarchy-feminist thing to do. Who I really am is someone who needs encouragement and love so that I can raise my self-esteem.

Am I reflective and continuing to search? This I believe I am, though that hasn't always been the case. I used to be quite hedged in by patriarchal modes of thinking to focus all of my attention on the larger, external problems of hunger, dictatorships and armed revolutions, and to denigrate those who spent any time on interpersonal, psychological or spiritual understanding. I now realize that I accepted the lack of encouragement and value from others, especially men, in these areas and used that as an excuse not to push ahead with what I really wanted to do, which was to take my reflectiveness ideal to its depths.

The truth of all this is often painful to me. But it seems it has to be dealt with before I can start to fully manifest, rather than merely give lip service to, my ideals. I have faith in myself that if my love for truth has brought me this far, I will also have the patience and courage to work it all out eventually. What makes it not quite so bad is that I am not alone in my struggle — that everyone needs to deal with their own truths vs. their facades to some degree.

Moving through these things also gives me a lot more faith in and patience for my friends and the rest of the world because I now have a fuller grasp of what social change is on inner as well as outer levels. I'm a lot more human now than in the days I felt like screaming my ideas at people.

I am beginning to feel the stirrings of true freedom. For I am in search of a freedom I can feel in my heart and soul, as well as in my mind. □



For anyone concerned with the fate of the earth, the journal **Fifth Estate** is a must reading. Their recent spring issue featured a horrifying look at the probable future of biotechnology (see *In the Image of Capital*). Also, their retrospective on the Vietnam war was a hideous, sobering reminder of just how far the U.S. ruling class was (and is) willing to go in its pursuit of domination.

The scientific community is always begging our indulgence, demanding that we place faith in its good intentions. **Fifth Estate**, in their feature on biotechnology, compares past promises with present realities and projects current "breakthroughs" in genetic engineering and the like into the future. The results are not heartening. Not only do scientists lack an appreciation of synergistics (how the parts fit together into the whole), they lack the most elementary common sense. They fail to see that ethics is the most important science of all. **Fifth Estate** will have published their summer issue by the time this hits the stands, but you can write to them and ask for their spring issue. The cost is 50¢ U.S. plus postage. Write to: **Fifth Estate P.O. Box 02548 Detroit, Michigan USA 48202**

What more perfect example of the moral cretinism of scientists than the article which appeared in the March 29th **Globe and Mail** (*Canadians already do research on lasers sought for Star Wars*). Questioned about the wisdom of doing research funded by the U.S. Air Force, Dr. Measures of the University of Toronto re-



plies "Our work is totally free of constraints. We publish it in regular scientific journals. There are a lot of people who say you shouldn't do this research because it can be used in the Strategic Defence Initiative (*Star Wars* — ed.). But what we are doing is basic science, which can be used for either good or bad."

Fortunately, some highly placed professionals do have a conscience. In Germany, federal judges and prosecutors organized public demonstrations calling for the removal of Pershing II and Cruise missiles. Some 500 of them participated in a peace forum, and some helped blockade Mutlangen Air Base. According to Ulf Panzer of Hamburg, "We German judges were silent 50 years ago, when the Third Reich began to install its regime of injustice. We later became a docile instrument of the National-Socialists and their immense crimes. Being silent today, we feel, would make us guilty once again."

For a fuller account of the judges' campaign, see the January/February 1985 issue of *Northern Sun*, available from: **Northern Sun Alliance 1519 E. Franklin Avenue Minneapolis, Minnesota USA 55404**

On Wednesday, June 26, I had the good fortune of hearing Brooklyn Rivera, leader of Misurasata, the main Indian organization on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast. He came to Toronto under the sponsorship of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples to speak about the most recent breakdown in the talks between his organization and the Nicaraguan government. He was an articulate speaker and made a number of interesting points.

He related how the conflict between the Indians and the Sandinistas had arisen. After the revolution, his organization had been highly enthusiastic and sought to work with the government. Trouble began when the leadership tried to ignore traditional Indian forms of organization and sought to impose the so-called *mass organizations* on the people. Furthermore, they refused to recognize Native sovereignty over their traditional lands, sought to nationalize their natural resources and, upon discovering their Native leaders were organizing to plan for autonomy, arrested several and threatened them with 20-30 year prison sentences while calling them "separatists" and "racists". Upon the arrest of their leaders, the Indians rose up spontaneously, using traditional weapons. Thus, the Native struggle predated the *contra* movement (with which it is often confused) by two years. The Indians have fought sporadically ever since without external support or supplies. Rivera himself was imprisoned in Honduras, a country which is helping the Somozistas.

Since then, peace talks have been held between the Miskito Indians and the government. These talks recently broke down when Rivera refused to participate any longer in what he called "bad faith" negotiations. The government, it seems, was unwilling to make anything more than token concessions on the issue of autonomy. Rivera concluded his remarks by saying that the breakdown in the talks was regrettable because it gave the reactionary forces (the *contras* and the U.S.) more time to consolidate their power and commit

further acts of bloodshed.

Particularly distressing and disgusting was the chauvinism of the audience (many of whom were members and supporters of Canadian Action for Nicaragua). During the question and answer period, they repeatedly challenged Rivera's credibility as if the track record of governments — Marxist governments at that — gives any cause to taking their word over that of Native people. There is not a single Marxist revolution in history which has granted Native people autonomy (not Russia, not China, not Vietnam). In this respect,



Marxist governments are no different from any other. All states view autonomy as a threat to the hegemony of the central authority. And it is an axiom of faith among Leninists (and the Sandinistas are certainly Leninists) that they alone have a right to rule, and in ruling they will countenance no challenges to the state's authority. Thus, to attribute the conflict between the Miskitos and the Sandinistas solely to the pressure of "imperialist encirclement" is to ignore the fact that the basis for confrontation is built right into the Sandinistas' ideology. (As will be revealed in the next issue of KIO, Sandino himself was no Marxist. He was a "peasant anarchist" in the tradition of Emiliano Zapata, whose name and reputation have been appropriated by the rulers in Managua.) Like Reagan, the Sandinistas want to force all conflict into an East/West axis. If the Indians aren't pro-government, they must be pro-CIA. But, as Brooklyn Rivera put it, the Indians of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast aren't interested in European ideologies, they're interested in self-determination for Native people.

For an enlightening treatment of the history of Sandinista/Miskito relations, see the Summer 1985 issue of *Akwesasne Notes*, particularly "Bogota, Colombia: Miskito/Sandinista Negotiations" and "Disappearance of Raiti: Miskito Interview." Copies of *Notes* are available by writing to Akwesasne Notes, Mohawk Nation via Roosevelttown, New York, 13683. Copies are \$1.50 per issue or \$8.00 (U.S.) for 6 issues. □





from *Anti-Authoritarians Anonymous*



# Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?

K.I.O. Interviews Murray Bookchin

*Murray Bookchin is the author of numerous books and pamphlets. His most famous include **Post-Scarcity Anarchism** and **The Ecology of Freedom**. His ideas have deeply influenced some members of the **Kick It Over Collective**. This interview was conducted at a conference on community economic development in Waterloo, Ontario in early 1985. Thanks to Steve H. for his generous assistance, and to Murray B. for giving so unstintingly of his time. The interview was conducted by Ron Hayley, and edited by Alexandra Devon. Part 2 will be printed in the December issue of **Kick It Over**.*

**K.I.O.:** *You've said in your writings that we are undergoing a change as far-reaching as the transition from hunting and gathering to agriculture or from agriculture to industry. Could you elaborate on this and talk a bit about why this is occurring now?*

**Murray Bookchin:** The transformation I have in mind is cybernation, genetic engineering, nucleonics, and the sophistication of electronic technology in vast numbers of fields and the development of means of surveillance of a highly sophisticated form. The extent of the transformation is absolutely astonishing. What we find today is a totally immoral economy and society which has managed to unearth the secrets of matter and the secrets of life at the most fundamental level. This is a society that, in no sense, is capable of utilizing this knowledge in any way that will produce a social good. Obviously there are leavings from a banquet that fall from the table but my knowledge and my whole experience with capitalism and with hierarchical society generally is that almost every advance is at best a promise and at worst utterly devastating for the world.

So when one speaks of this combination which has occurred, only within my own lifetime, of plumbing the deepest secrets of matter, notably nuclear energy, and transforming matter into energy and bioengineering, I feel that we are confronted with a revolution of monumental importance and while this revolution is in the hands of capital and the state, its impact upon society could very well be devastating. I cannot foresee that it will benefit human society or the ecology of our planet as much as it will be utilized for domination and hierarchy, which is what all technological innovation, to one extent or another, has always been utilized for.

The scope of the revolution can be delineated in many ways; first of all, cybernetics threatens to undermine the status of almost every kind of non-professional working-class, white or blue collar. I have every expectation that if cybernation is introduced, and it is only a matter of time until it is, it will displace tens of millions of people. The industrial working class will be reduced, at least in the major Euro-American centers, in all probability, to a stratum that is no larger



photo of Murray Bookchin by Alexandra Devon

numerically than that of the farmers today who number some four million in the U.S.

Already we are witnessing a decline of the American labor movement, the organized trade union movement, from 1 out of 3 workers (and this is a diminishing labour force as well) to 1 out of 5. This also reflects the diminution of class consciousness even on the elementary level of trade unionism. I'm not speaking of syndicalism. I'm speaking of ordinary bread and butter trade unionism. I can also foresee perhaps a labour force that does not number more than say 17 million, after numbering very close to nearly 27 million, which will eventually go down to 10 million, will eventually go down to 7 million, will eventually go down to 5 million. Not to be able to foresee this is extremely myopic.

I still lived in a time when there were close to 30 million farmers and now we have only 4 million. This is a tremendous revolution, first of all in the way production occurs. It's a tremendous revolution in the class structure of this society.

Please remember very well that whether one was a Marxist or an anarchist, particularly a syndicalist, it was generally supposed that the population would become more proletarianized and that its power lay in the capacity to control the means of production. One of the primary concepts of anarcho-syndicalism, not to speak of Marxism, was the idea that the working class was the all-powerful force whose going on general strike would paralyze the system. But if so much of the working class is diminished numerically and so much of industry has become robotized, then concepts like the general strike become utterly meaningless.

That would be the first consequence — namely the diminution of labour as a powerful force. Another consequence would be the political problem this is going to raise. With so many "irrelevant" people, so to speak,



what kind of political structure is going to deal with them? What are we going to do with tens of millions of people that have no place in this society? How are they going to be used? How are they going to be employed?

In the U.S. we still have a largely agrarian constitution built around republican principles that even the bourgeoisie did not want to accept. It benefitted from them but it didn't want to accept them. These were the principles formulated by Virginian aristocrats, based on land, who still had an agrarian perspective however much they were locked into capitalism. These are principles emerging from small farmers, compromises with the commercial bourgeoisie, not even the industrial bourgeoisie. This is the revered picture of American republicanism and American democracy. I could just as well include aspects of Canadian federalism. Such structures which we designate as "bourgeois revolutionary structures" are utterly incompatible with the future development of capitalism.

The checks and balances that exist in the American constitution and which we, as radicals, once regarded as very reactionary because they didn't give power to the people, are actually serving to check the executive power, and inhibiting the totalitarianization of American political life. Reagan was obliged to pull the Marines from Beirut. He cannot easily invade Nicaragua because of checks and balances that were once regarded as undemocratic but which now actually inhibit a highly authoritarian president from doing whatever he wants in the world.

By the same token, we still have a republican system with democratic features to it that make protest possible, that make a public opinion possible and which stand in the way of manipulating the population and controlling it, particularly a population that has faced a form of economic extinction. So I can see a tremendous tension building up, a crisis between the so-called "bourgeois" past and the capitalist future. I don't think we can overlook this enormous tension. That bourgeois past has libertarian features about it: the town meetings of New England, municipal and local control, the American mythology that the less government the better, the American belief in independence and individualism. All these things are antithetical to a cybernetic economy, a highly centralized corporative economy and a highly centralized political system that is necessary to manage that economy on a domestic and world scale, not to speak of a bureaucracy of enormous proportions which has an interest of its own in the consolidation of power. These contradictions have to be faced; they have an extremely radical potential and somehow or other we have to deal with them.

**K.I.O.:** *In some of your writings, you, and some of your colleagues talked about how each mode of production, to borrow the Marxist terminology, tends to create a certain epistemology or way of looking at the world. Are there any other ideological trends commensurate with this economic change that are worth commenting on briefly?*

**Murray Bookchin:** Well, the most important one is the

invasion of the commodity as an epistemological outlook into ways of thinking. This expresses itself in expressions such as "I'll buy that" idea, "What is the bottom line?" or "I'd like some feedback." These expressions are not to be viewed light-mindedly. They're not just idiomatic attempts to conform with systems theory and cybernetics. They really reflect a business mentality and a cybernetic mentality that is very significant from an epistemological point of view.

The modern corporation is a system and the way it's diagrammed on flowcharts is in terms of feedback and it's not accidental that systems theory has now become almost imperialistically pervasive in our thinking. We use its language: feedback, input, output. We don't have dialogue any more from the Greek word *dialogos*, *logos* meaning mind as well as speech. We use information in terms of data, not in terms of giving form to something. We think now in terms of typologies (*according to the dictionary definition, the doctrine or study of types or symbols* — ed.) instead of processes. So we develop flow diagrams and we lay out patterns which are philosophically at odds with the idea of a changing society. We think more in terms of a dynamic equilibrium of a given society than the dialectical concept of a changing, self-transforming and self-destructive economy in which the seeds of self-destruction are built into the society.

This type of logical and cybernetic mentality reveals an accommodation with the status quo. It's considered a given that we're going to have corporations — how are we going to make them more efficient or effective? And where they are destructive, how to make them more destructive; where they are pernicious, how to make them more pernicious. And that has profoundly affected not only our language but inasmuch as so many thoughts are formed by language, our very ability to think. We need a real cleansing of the language or else our revolutionary thinking is bound to be perverted by this mentality. Already, we have writers like Jurgen Habermas who uses typologies and flow diagrams. This man professes to be a Marxist, but he's totally broken in my opinion with even the dialectical mentality of Marxism which is built around the idea of an immanent development in which decay is latent in any social order. The typological approach sees no decay, sees merely layout and here information is really the form, not only the data that is supplied in laying out a social structure. You assume the social structure to be static and, from that, the main thing is to examine the internal workings as though society were an engine. And all you have to do is talk about whether the parts are working efficiently or whether you can improve the parts, technologically, so that you live within the status quo as a matter of habit without ever knowing that you are doing so.

**K.I.O.:** *What you're talking about seems connected with the whole trend towards an information-centred economy. It's something that puzzles me. It was always assumed, in the past, that the bottom line in economics is the production of real goods and services, real*



wealth. Now it seems that so much of what goes on economically is the purchasing, sale, and processing of information. I wonder if you could comment briefly on what this means economically, why it's happening now and how it relates to more traditional economic processes.

**Murray Bookchin:** It's interesting to me that you said the "bottom line". I'm not being critical, I'm just showing how much we say these things without being conscious of the extent to which we operate within the "paradigms" and the typologies of capitalism.

We are going to produce commodities. What we're merely saying is that what we call "information" is also a commodity, and it's assumed exaggerated importance. But information is not merely merchandisable, it's used to produce. So, I do not see that we've



entered an information age as much as I think we are learning how to accumulate information for all kinds of manipulatory purposes, be they economic, political, or psychological.

I resist the use of the word "information" as I resist the use of the word "deindustrialization". I think what they're doing is cybernating the economy and the economy will produce goods, a very substantial proportion of which will be military. In the United States, you're not deindustrializing as much as reindustrializing in a new way. The Americans are turning the economy into a war economy. Its greatest product consists of missiles, rockets, satellites, space technologies, weaponry, and everything else is being geared around that. They're ready to let the Japanese, the Asians, generally, produce the textiles and let the Mexicans and Third World peoples produce the blue collar type industrial goods of traditional capitalism. They'll always maintain enough of that in America, by the way, in order to support the arms industry or at least to meet their minimal needs.

**K.I.O.:** There's a lot of economic polarization going

on with the trend towards cybernation but, to tell you the truth, I would have thought it would have gone further, in the sense that a lot of people still have a lot of money in North America. Does that come from exploitation of the third world, as in the trend away from the pauperization of the working class towards affluent consumerism? What's going to happen now that a lot of people are becoming economically redundant? Will they be maintained artificially as consumers or will they be pauperized?

**Murray Bookchin:** I can't foresee what they will do. It's beyond my life span, beyond my time, beyond my era. I can only offer various possibilities. They can militarize the whole society in which every stratum of society will be, essentially, whether in uniform or not, working for the military. They may have to initiate some systems of birth control. I'm not suggesting genocide, but some way of diminishing the population. They may create a two-tiered society and economy in which there will be the very affluent and the others will fend for themselves.

There's a futurama called **Blade Runner**, which is the most realistic futurama I've ever seen, at least in terms of what the future may look like. You have a split-level economy in society, the privileged living in staggering high-rise buildings while down in the streets you have squalor and catch as catch can, a lumpen proletariat. Bioengineering plays a very important role. One way or another they'll have to have a highly controlled society; that much I'm convinced of. How totalitarian or authoritarian it will be is hard to foresee.

**K.I.O.:** One of the most disturbing things for me is that, both in terms of liberatory forces as well as some of the things you've described, it has never felt it harder to predict what's happening or what the different tendencies are. The situation is so contradictory.

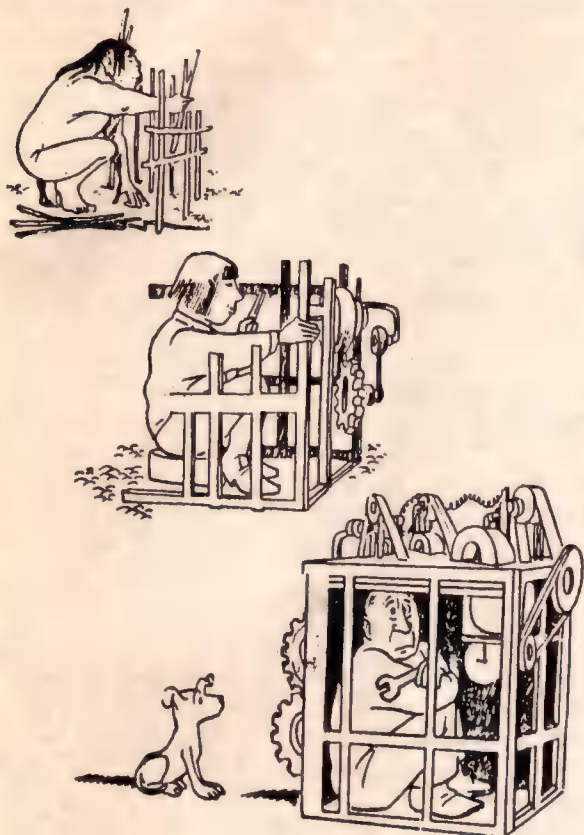
**Murray Bookchin:** Yes, I know, because capitalism is restructuring its entire class base. Capitalism was never a pure system. We still don't know what mature capitalism is, assuming it will be capitalism if it becomes mature. The capitalist societies of the 19th century had a vast number of preindustrial features. Admittedly, in industry you had capitalism but once you left the immediate industrial sector you went back into the neighborhoods which were really pre-capitalist and pre-industrial. You went into family farms and extended families. You didn't have shopping malls or supermarkets but small family retail establishments.

Now, and especially since the 1950's — and remember that I regard the second World War as a tremendous turning point in the history of humanity, not just the history of capitalism — when you go back to your home you go back to immediate media control in the form of television. You're wired up to Betamax and VCR's. You have telephones. You have nuclear families or singles living in high rises. You have shopping malls. You have automobiles. And capitalism invades your life in the language that you use, in the relationships you establish. Capitalism has, more or less, come into its own and we're beginning to see something of what mature capitalism is like, or, at least we are seeing



the beginnings of a mature form of capitalism, in contradistinction to the earlier capitalist system which was still very mixed with pre-industrial, semi-feudal-type patriarchal forms.

I'm not saying that the earlier society was better, but I'm saying that at least the spirit of rebellion could be nourished by community networks, by discourse in



Vadillo, el Sol de Mexico

which you were relatively free of the mass media and the educational system to an extent that many young people today cannot even imagine. The revolts against capitalism that occurred memorably, whether you look to Russia in 1917 or Spain in the 1930's — and there were other revolts all along the way — were really the work of peasants in overalls. The revolutionary workers' movement was really a peasant movement in overalls. These people were people who existed in the tension between two cultures. Even in the 1930's it was conceivable because people lived in the tension of two cultures, one pre-capitalist and pre-industrial and the other one industrial and capitalist.

So the pure working class is a fiction. The hereditary working class is a fiction. In fact wherever the working class became hereditary it fed into the system. This was most noticeable in Germany where there was never a chance for a workers' revolution anyways, Rosa Luxembourg notwithstanding. And Rosa Luxembourg understood that there wasn't a chance of a successful workers' revolution in central Europe.

And to this day when one talks of revolutions, one talks of national revolutions of peasant populations. So the revolt against capitalism usually occurred among

classes that were alien to capitalism to begin with. We named them workers because they happened to be in the factories, but we forgot that they were only one step away from the village. This was the case in Russia. This was the case in Spain. This was the case, to a great extent, in France during the Paris Commune of craftsmen and artisans. It was not the industrial workers who guided the Commune but the old *sans culottes* literally **breechless**, republicans of Parisian lower classes in French revolution, according to the **Concise Oxford Dictionary**) of 1789-1794.

Even the miners today in Britain still live in villages; they're not the London proletariat, which has been remarkably unsympathetic to their strike. That working class is disappearing completely. It's becoming extinct, and it's a real question of whether or not the workers — industrial proletarians, organized in the mass-production industries that Marx so admired — were ever revolutionary, if they ever were capable of being revolutionary as a class, not as working people. Working people may become radicalized. What I'm talking about is the view that the proletariat, compactly unified as a class, within the womb of capitalism, will destroy the capitalist social order through the very extension of capitalism. In fact the very extension of capitalism is destroying exactly that class which exhibited the only good promise of any kind of revolutionary, or at least insurrectionary, opposition to capital.

**K.I.O.:** *There are some interesting developments going on in science and philosophy (specifically in biology), new ways of analysing cooperation in nature. There's talk of a paradigmatic shift and new ways of analysing things in philosophy. For example, David Bohm has written a book on the theory of "implicate order". It almost seems as if all these little pieces are trying to pull together and create something new, but what are the prospects of that happening?*

**Murray Bookchin:** Well, I believe that it is essential, first of all, to develop a grounding in something more than public opinion, notably the idea that capital punishment is good on Tuesday because 51% of the people are for it or it's bad on Wednesday because 51% of the people are against it. This relativistic ethics is totally lacking in any substance or meaning. So I think ethics has to be grounded in something that's objective. The Greeks tried to do it by basing it in nature and what they thought was some concept of natural law or nature philosophy.

Ecology is beginning that project again — looking for something in which to objectively base a concept of the good, of the virtuous — some criteria of what constitutes right and wrong that is not merely subject to the vicissitudes of "What's good for me is good for me and what's good for you is good for you (a purely functional and privatistic morality)."

I have developed in my own writings an approach to ethics which is the very opposite of the Victorian conception of nature. The Victorian conception of nature was that nature is a realm of cruelty — as though nature had any morality — that nature is stingy, that nature is



blind — mute and necessitarian — and that society is the realm of reason, and of freedom. The necessitarian concept of nature is that technology is the realm of emancipation, in contrast to the scarce resources or stinginess of nature. The ecological approach, on the other hand, says that nature is neither moral, nor cruel, nor any of these things. On the contrary, nature is fecund (*prolific, fertile, fertilizing* — ed.), ever innovative, a realm of change and complexity, of ecosystems that succeed one upon the other. And you can grade, so to speak, society out of nature and you can develop an ethics that is continuous with nature.

I can go into that in very great detail, and it would require a whole separate discussion to indicate how one can overcome the dualisms that exist between mind and body, between society and nature, in which the two are placed in opposition to each other. What markedly distinguishes a human society from an animal and plant community is that you don't have institutions that make it possible for Nicholas the II to become Czar of Russia, even though intellectually and psychologically he wasn't equipped to run a post office, or for Louis the XVII to become anything more than an ordinary locksmith and have control over the destinies of millions of people.

So the distinction between society and animal and plant communities must be made, but I can see how, through the mediation of a mother-child relationship (*why only mother-child?* — ed.), society begins to take root in the protracted infancy of the young. Here you develop sociation. This is a distinctively human attribute which leads ultimately to the consolidation of family relationships, initially around the mother, and after extending to society at large. So the origins of society are not each against all as Hobbes would have contended or as many "rugged individualists" do. The origins of society are above all in cooperation, in participation and in sharing and caring.

So I think these dualisms can be overcome through a historical perspective. Mind cannot be separated from body because mind emerges from body. In fact, there's a natural history of development of mind from simple, reactive cells to nerve networks and the development of complex nerve systems, and finally to different forms of brains and their integration.

So I don't find it necessary to deal with a chasm between mind and nature because I see mind emerging from nature. There's no need to work with a dualistic conception. My image of nature is not one of stingy, cruel, blind nature that has to be conquered but, on the contrary, a fecund nature that forever gives rise to greater complexity and, in giving rise to ever greater complexity, opens up new evolutionary pathways in which animals and plants, however germinally (and I don't want to impute anthropomorphically will and choice — but something like will and choice), participate in evolutionary development. So that you don't have merely natural selection. What you have is the participation of species in their own evolution. Evolution is an active process that comes as much from the

species themselves as from genetic change or mutations.

All of which leads us to the idea that germinal freedom emerges from nature. Not freedom as we know it, where we exercise choice will, and conscious decision, but a germinal freedom in that opportunities created in which animals participate in their own selection and in some sense select themselves for survival. It's not only a question of survival in nature, it's a question of development and growth and complexity. Well, from that standpoint, I can already begin to see that freedom in a theme in evolution no less significant than complexity; that the development of a nervous system is a theme in evolution; that consciousness or the movement toward consciousness is a theme in evolution, and the animal and plant evolution grades into social evolution. So it is out of that that I very strongly feel a ground is created for ethics. I'm not saying nature is ethical. We are ethical. But the grounding for an ethics can be explored; freedom is a theme in the evolution of life. It's not just an idealistic goal.

What disturbs me about many of the eco-philosophies that are emerging now is that they are structured around systems theory. I regard systems theory as very valuable, but it's largely reductionist and I've already stated some of my criticisms of systems theory — it's really a corporate theory in some respects. Which is not to say that systems theory is erroneous, provided it simply colonizes a terrain which lends itself to systems analysis. But to imperialize it and say that it is the totality of everything is as unsettling to me and disturbing as to claim that passive-receptive epistemology or Taoism is the alpha and omega of eco-philosophy.

What I'm beginning to see is many well-meaning ecologists making use of systems theory as their methodology and their paradigm, using the passive-receptive mentality of: "Don't interfere — lay back, let nature go on its own. Any type of technology is interfering with nature." I believe that human beings can self-consciously intervene in nature without trying to dominate it. They can act as products of nature, as self-conscious nature, able to facilitate the evolutionary process of complexity and spontaneous development — going along with the grain, so to speak, of natural evolution.

So my eco-philosophy, if I may use that word, is somewhat different from many of the other eco-philosophies that are around. What's important is that people feel the need for an eco-philosophy, and it's not coming from the philosophers, it's coming from the scientists — oddly enough. They need it, and it's ironic that philosophy, which denigrates nature and regards it as archaic, is now confronting a scientific community that is increasingly turning to philosophy or making up its own philosophy. And if we don't make up a radical philosophy, then you might get very reactionary ones, including fascistic ones — like "blood and soil" and "the selfish gene", and like the views expressed in E.R. Wilson's books on sociobiology. □





## Just when you thought it was safe to go back to your hamburger...

Sam Wagar's letter entitled *Omnivorously Yours* in the June issue of *KIO* expressed a homocentric arrogance matched only by his apparent ignorance of animal liberation philosophy. The speciesist rationalizations are reminiscent of the arguments used by sexists and racists to defend their prejudices which served to benefit themselves at the expense of another group — in this case, non-humans.

Wagar incorrectly assumes that animal rights activists (whom he stereotypes as foolish misguided reactionaries) approach nature with a simplistic fairy-tale view of non-human animals. Animal liberationists are motivated by a respect and admiration for nature, their struggle is to liberate non-human animals from the tyranny of human animals, not to orchestrate the entire web of life so that it will fit into some perverse Disneyworld illusion. The damage already done to the earth and all her creatures through human manipulation that strives for control over every aspect of life and nature is painfully evident. Animal rights activists are working to stem the destructive tide, not to further tamper with and control nature.

Wagar says he "loves animals". His "love" for them is irrelevant. The question is does he respect their right not to be treated as a commodity? Does he respect the individuality and intrinsic worth of each living, thinking, sentient being? Does his "love" translate to equal moral consideration for all

sentient beings, or is it the same sort of flippant remark one might reserve for the loving of "things"?

And what an imperious statement he makes regarding domestic animals. "We provide domestic animals with food, shelter, protection from other predators, and mates in return for flesh." Clearly Wagar has no knowledge of factory farms or the tormented lifestyle of his dinner before he picked up the cellophaned corpse in a supermarket. Agriculture is a unilateral arrangement. They haven't asked for our "protection" in exchange for their flesh. "Agriculture, including the domestication of animals, is a good thing" in exactly the same way that domestication of women was a "good thing". It's great for those who stand to profit by the domestication and not-so-great for the domesticated.

Agriculture is **not** an extension of a natural human/non-human relationship. If it was "natural", you would run down your prey, as do all other "natural" carnivores, kill it with your powerful jaws and razor-sharp canines, and proceed to tear the raw flesh off the bones. Factory farms, antibiotics, growth-promoters, stunguns, sharpened blades and cellophane wrap, do not a natural carnivore make.

On the ALF, Wagar's speculations are based on both ignorance and contemptuous assumptions. No liberated animal has ever died in the care of the ALF for lack of expertise of knowledge. They have consistently provided immediate and competent veterinary care for rescued animals and have a long-standing track record in ensuring that all animals are placed in appropriate environments. Photos and written documentation of animals nursed back to health by the ALF have been published in both the mainstream and alternative





press world-wide.

No one who had any idea of what goes on behind the well-secured doors of an animal research lab could possibly make a statement suggesting that the animals are better off there than in the compassionate, caring hands of the ALF. Sounds familiar though. It's the commonly heard battle cry of the exploiter: "They're better off being exploited by me than living free"; "They like it here"; "I know what I'm doing, you don't"; "I'm smart, you're stupid".

You're a fucking fascist, Wagar — of the speciesist kind!

Vicki Miller

Mt. Albert, Ontario

In reply to Sam Wagar's letter concerning the animal rights movement!

While I can see, and occasionally agree with, many of Sam Wagar's points concerning the problems animal rights poses for the natural order of things, I cannot agree with his conclusion that the movement for animal rights is actually mis-directed altruism which need not apply beyond our own species.

I agree that it is not 'wrong' for a hungry lion to chase down and kill a zebra for dinner. Likewise, I would say that it would not be 'wrong' for the zebra to escape from the lion thereby causing the lion to starve. While Mr. Wagar appears to see nature as his basis for morality, I see nature as amoral, where morality doesn't exist and cannot apply. While it seems that Mr. Wagar would say it is 'right' for a snake to eat a frog I would say it is neither right or wrong.

I do not believe that morality can exist without choice.

Morality begins with choice. In nature there is no choice. A lion cannot choose to eat fruits and berries instead of meat. But humans have that choice. We can choose to survive either by eating animals or by leaving them out of our diet altogether. So, what's the difference between eating a plant or an animal, a potato or a pig? For me it is a question of suffering. Animals can suffer, while as far as I know, plants cannot. While all cells can apparently feel (react to stimuli), plant cells included, it has not been shown they suffer.

Suffering is more than a physiological process. It is psychological. To help illustrate, imagine you put your hand on a red hot burner. The nerve cells in our hand will react in a certain way and send a message to your brain causing you pain. Now imagine that your spinal cord has been damaged and you have no sensation in your hands. If you were then to put your hand on a hot burner the nerve cells in your hand would react in exactly the same way as before, yet you would feel no pain. There would be no suffering. Because plants have no brains I do not believe they suffer.

If we were ever shown that plants do have the same capacity for pain as animals then our choice of food would lose its moral content, as we would no longer have a choice to cause or prevent suffering through what we eat. The new moral question would then be survival. "Is it right to live if you must cause suffering in the process." I personally would say yes to this, but I would try to eat only the absolute minimum for a life without hunger pains (I take my suffering into account also), avoiding gluttony so as not to cause needless suffering to either plant or animal.

Another disagreement I have with Mr. Wagar is that he said the domestication of animals was a good thing. He then went on to imply that the food, shelter, and protection we provide them with in exchange for their meat is a fair trade-off. Is this the same guy who seems to worship Mother Nature, that talks about animal rightists as "denying the natural order"? It sounds as though he may not be aware of the current state of animal 'husbandry': that sows today spend most of their lives pregnant lying in concrete stalls on their sides; that veal calves are taken from their mothers and raised anemic on artificial milk in darkness and isolation; that chickens spend their lives in cages so crowded that their feathers fall out. I don't think that sounds 'natural'.

While I believe Mr. Wagar is right that some pretty stupid and unecological actions have been undertaken on behalf of animals, I would hesitate to say that they were the actions of animal rightists. I feel the animal rightists are deeply tied into the environmental movement and that they generally weigh the ecological and moral consequences of each choice before they act. (We're not all out to convert wolves and tigers to vegetarianism.) I assure Mr. Wagar, that of the lab raids I know of, none of the rescued animals "died within a few days" after being rescued. ALF takes animal care and housing into consideration before each rescue attempt.

One last question for Mr. Wagar (and those of like mind). Would you say that cannibalism in today's society would be wrong only because of its 'unnatural' for a member of one species to eat a member of its own species, or would you argue that it would be wrong because it is unnecessary when alternative foods are available which don't involve the taking of another human life?

Sincerely,  
Todd Putnam  
Seattle

In response to Sam Wagar's letter (*Omnivorously Yours*) in the last issue of **Kick It Over**, I would like to clarify some fallacies and misconceptions that have been perpetuated by



Sam's ignorance and stupidity.

As an activist in the animal rights movement, and more specifically, in the recently-formed Animal Liberation front Support Group, I was once again amazed at how so-called anarchists can simply ignore the specieist argument or even justify their own specieism using single-minded lines such as: "Human morality does not apply to natural relationships, just to relations between human beings." Or the incredible outrageous comment: "Because our species' domestication of animals and plants the human species is spectacularly successful." As if this was great achievement! Our species' domestication of women, indigenous peoples, as well as the human mind has done far more to perpetuate our species, and given the situation of our planet and patriarchy I would never say this was successful!

Sam as well seems to think that just because he does not want to expand his human ethics to cover our relations with other species, then the whole animal rights movement is wrong. It is with the greatest of respect for all life and the desire to put some balance back into our ecosystem that animal rights activists readily expand their ethics to cover animals.

In regards to the comments about the ALF, Sam has repeated the common argument of the vivisectors and animal abusers — that rescued animals will be worse off than they were while being tortured. Nothing but the reverse is more true. We don't need "pocket jungles" for rescued monkeys — there are primate sanctuaries both here and in the U.S. ready and willing to take in liberated monkeys. Obviously these people are knowledgeable in caring for primates. Another completely unfounded comment, pure speculation as Sam admits, that the "vast majority" of rescued animals die within a few days "simply because they don't know enough to care for them", sounds to me like more public relations work for the vivisectors. The ALF has qualified veterinarians on stand-by to immediately care for abused animals, or to perform whatever surgery is required to remove implants, etc. Any sensitive human would know more about the care of dogs or cats than the so-called researchers, who view them as tools — equal with the restraining chair or brain implants. The only animals the ALF have killed were the ones in such a pathetic state that there was little or no chance of recovery.

I would suggest to Sam that the brush-up on his education of the animal rights movement before he spouts the rhetoric of the vivisectors. We have enough of their lies and propaganda to deal with than that from so-called allies.

For more information on all kinds of animal abuse, write to **ARK II (Canadian Animal Rights Network)** at 542 Mt. Pleasant Rd., #103, Toronto, Ont. M5S 2M7, or **PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)** at Box 42516, Washington, D.C. 20015. Two excellent books available from either group are **Animal Liberation** by Peter Singer and **Slaughter Of The Innocent** by Hans Ruesch. For more information about the **Animal Liberation Front Support Group**, write to: P.O. Box 915, Stn. 'F', Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2N9.

For the ALFSG,  
David Barbarash

*The Kick It Over Collective does not feel that Sam alone should be singled out as the "evil carnivore". Some members of KIO are not vegetarians.*

Dear K.I.O. (Fuckin' **A** edition).

I am proud of the quality of your publication and filled with glee. "Not Spraypainting Garages" inspired me and I will

probably respond direct to the author with some suggestions. I think you are all smart. You make me feel smart too. Everything was great. I was not impressed by Sam Wagar, Mr. Witchman. I think he is lonely up there and he knows nothing of what he criticizes and his letter was a big LAUGH. "Baby Talk" should have been researched and written by a woman. It wasn't interesting. It just touched what could have been excellent. Everything else was interesting and I swelled with pride and delight until I close to busted at the seams. Honest, I luv ya. Keep churning, sisters and bros.

Sue Dymont  
Montreal, Quebec.

Dear Ms. Redfearne,

In your article in **KIO** you asked for people with ideas or workable solutions to write to you. Perhaps I can be of some help.

I was involved in a local anarchist group in Denver from 1980 to 1983 which never had any of the problems you describe. We always had our meetings at the same time of day on the same day of the week so that members could schedule their other commitments accordingly.

We agreed upon a quorum of members who could make decisions at the meetings. A meeting would begin at 7 p.m. or as soon as we had a quorum after 7 p.m. Generally the meeting would begin no more than 15 minutes late, which is tolerable I think.

Everyone was free to volunteer for as much or as little as they wished with no pressure to do more work than they felt comfortable with. However, all work volunteered for was *definitely* expected to be done in a timely way. In our meetings we had a person (rotated each meeting) whose job was to write down what chores, errands etc. each individual took responsibility for during the course of the meeting. At the end of the meeting the notes would be read back aloud so that everyone left the meeting with a concise idea of what they needed to do that week. At the following meeting, the notes from the previous week would again be read aloud and each member would report on their work. Tasks which were completed were crossed off the list and tasks still to be done were recopied onto the list for the current week.

This system worked really well. I don't recall any regular member ever expressing displeasure or saying they felt "oppressed" by it or anything of that sort. We all felt good about being part of a small, close-knit group which was effective in turning its ideas into successful projects time after time after time. **Note:** an important key word at the beginning of this paragraph is "regular member". We had our share of quote "spontaneous" unquote people who passed through. They never stayed long. Sometimes one meeting would be all we would see of them. We never asked anyone to leave, they just didn't stick around. I guess they could see that this was a committed working group and that they would be expected to be responsible for themselves. Bye bye....

A few people criticized us for having too much structure and rules. The general attitude of the group was that diversity was healthy and we would be very happy to see another anarchist group in town (we were the only one) experimenting with different modes of internal organization. We said we would be willing to help such a group get started in any way we could. We offered the use of our mailing list as assistance. Invariably, none of the people who wanted more "spontaneity" managed to initiate anything at all, spontaneously or otherwise. As a result, by default, we "structured" types continued to be the only game in town.

In only one instance did someone who wanted more



"spontaneity" actually get as far as calling a meeting for a new spontaneous anarchist group. We were encouraging and supportive and wished him good luck. We even said we hoped we could federate with his new group once he got it off the ground. Well, would you believe it? When the date and time he had set arrived, the person from our group who had been sent to sit in on the meeting found a locked door. Mr. Spontaneous had spontaneously forgotten all about the fact that he had called a meeting! Completely spaced it out!!! He never got it together to call another one. So much for that. . . .

In conclusion, I suggest that you get in touch with all of the people you know who you say are as "fed up and pissed off" as you are. Call a meeting in your place and begin promptly. Agree on a process for meetings and follow it. Create as much structure as you need and no more, but stick to it. If the structure you have developed doesn't work, change it.

If you need to "find a way to let people know we need to discuss and solve these problems", don't bother. If things are as bad as you say then anyone who hasn't noticed by now is not likely to want to notice ever at all and you would be wasting your time trying to change them. A small vital, dedicated group of people, even if it is only two or three of you, can accomplish a surprising amount, while these same two or three people as part of a larger group in which the rest of the members are dead weight might accomplish very little.

Remember, just because you stop working politically with certain people doesn't mean you don't love them. One's

## Carbon Copy

### To the Editors:

After reading your latest (May 27) issue, I have come to the conclusion that the way the American press deals with political issues is on a par with what one would expect in the Soviet Union.

First, there's your flip treatment of the tragic MOVE deaths ("an extreme cause of Murphy's law . . . everything that could go wrong went even worse") — would you have described the KAL 007 episode in such terms? Then there's your dismissive attitude toward MOVE beliefs (which you say "never seemed quite comprehensible") — one could easily say that about Christianity, Star Wars, or any number of other things. Third, there's your attempt to trivialize the enormity of the crime committed against MOVE members by mentioning neighbors' grief over the loss of new carpeting and bathroom appliances. The whole way your writers framed and wrote the article smacks of telling people what to think: a subtle wink here, a subtle nudge there.

Then we have Richard Schickel's slobbering paean to a homicidal maniac in his review of the movie **Rambo**: "The long sequences in which he builds his body count are well-designed . . . They are, in fact, so compelling that one tends to chortle in anticipation of Rambo's next superhuman ploy, exploding with glee when it succeeds expectations."

TIME readers are supposed to get upset with a Vietnamese stamp showing Vietnamese guerillas firing on an American helicopter, but American mass murder of "gooks" for cinematic consumption is fine and dandy. Add to all this your eight-page spread on Madonna, the latest victim of media sexploitation, and I'd say if there were a contest for the sickest culture in the world, America would win hands down.

Ron Hayley  
Toronto, Ontario



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political comrades and one's social friendship circle do not have to be one and the same (although it is best if the latter includes the former at least in part). There are many more "marginal-lifestylists" running around calling themselves anarchists than actual committed militants who are genuinely serious about social change. Most of the "anarchists" I know are this way. I am still friends with them, though. Why not? I just don't take them seriously as *radicals* because they aren't, that's all.

Sister, I've got to go. I hope I have been of some help. Please write if you feel the need. I have been involved in politics since the late seventies and have made plenty of mistakes to learn from. Good luck as an activist. I care. . .

Best Wishes,  
Joachim Boay  
Denver, Colorado

TIME  
THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

TIME & LIFE BUILDING  
ROCKEFELLER CENTER  
NEW YORK 10020

ISABEL KOURI  
EDITORIAL OFFICES

June 25, 1985

Dear Mr. Hayley:

We are sorry you seem to have misread both TIME's report on the tragedy in Philadelphia and the review of **Rambo**. The latter was hardly a "paean to a slobbering maniac," as you suggest. What our critic said was that "at its most primitive level," that is, as a simple action movie, **Rambo** "works." But he then went on to say that the film exploits and makes a travesty of emotions that a decent movie would try to help us share more deeply. This is not praise.

The Move story was written with a sense of shock and sadness over the loss of life and, yes, over the loss of every possession the owners of the 61 burned out houses had sustained. These are not affluent families. They are mostly black families of modest income; the fires destroyed everything they had worked for so long and so hard to acquire. But we did not put the loss of property and possessions on the same level of importance as the loss of life.

Whether or not America's culture is "sick" is of course a matter of personal opinion. Since you argue from that premise, however, it is not surprising you would find evidence of that "sickness" in American journalism. We can only thank you for your letter, therefore, and express our regret again at your misreading of our reporting.

Sincerely,

Isabel Kouri  
Isabel Kouri

Mr. Ron Hayley  
P.O. Box 5811, Station A  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada M5W 1P2  
IK:sf



# ORGANIZING FOR THE 1990's

*"They quickly draw the conclusion that the status quo is supported by nothing more than bayonets, overlooking the fact that these bayonets enjoy the support of a vast consensus, which has been won for the status quo by means far more subtle and enduring than armed force." —Theodore Roszak*

What is the glue that holds an oppressive social order together? Historical experience would suggest that force of arms is a secondary factor. Both the Iranian (1979) and the Russian (1917) states collapsed with a minimum of bloodshed. Why? Because the primary factor — spiritual and social consensus — had become so honeycombed with rot that even soldiers would not take up arms in defense of their regimes.\*

*"...the process of weaning people away from the technocracy can never be carried through by way of a grim, hard-bitten, and self-congratulatory militancy, which at best belongs to tasks of ad hoc resistance. Beyond the tactics of resistance, but shaping them at all times, there must be a stance of life which seeks not simply to muster power against the misdeeds of society, but to transform the very sense people have of reality." —Theodore Roszak*

The importance of spiritual and social consensus has been underestimated by anarchists and Marxists alike. The whole understanding around the use of "excitative terror" by anarchists in the nineteenth century was that people were **already** revolutionary; all that was needed was to show the vulnerability of the ruling classes. This same viewpoint persists in modern-day guerrilla groups (largely Marxist-Leninist in their orientation) who blithely ignore the fact that most people prefer the state to the Marxist-Leninists. The repression brought down by their actions, far from radicalizing people, reinforces their **fear** of disorder, of violence, and shores up the moral "authority" and "legitimacy" of the state.

Much of the debate over strategy has focused on the issue of the necessity of violence vs. non-violence and reflects the dilemma of our time — namely that there is little foreseeable possibility of overthrowing the nuclear state, but neither is there reason to believe it will vol-

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\* This poses the question: why have the Chilean and South African regimes not fallen? Are the governments too powerful or is the social consensus still intact? The fact that Iran was not racially divided is perhaps one reason, though Iran possesses several very vocal minority ethnic groups. The degree of unity of South Africa's blacks (not to mention "coloreds" and Indians) has perhaps been overstated. The largest black tribe — the Zulus — is led by a man many anti-apartheid activists view as a tool of the regime, but this man, Chief Buthelezi, is not without influence. Then there are various trade union leaders and colored and Indian members of parliament. In other words, South Africa's oppressed population is far from unified. An overwhelming consensus of revolution does not perhaps yet exist.

by Ron Hayley

untarily retire from the stage of history (witness Central America and Indochina). But, in some ways, this debate ignores the prior question: how are we going to get the majority of people on our side in the first place (unless you think this is unimportant, as some people apparently do). The same process which occurred in Russia and Iran must be made to occur here: "Capitalist institutions must be hollowed out by a molecular historical process of disengagement and disloyalty to the point where any popular majoritarian movement can cause them to collapse for want of support and moral authority." (Murray Bookchin). Only this time, it must go deeper. The Russian and Iranian revolutions spawned totalitarian societies which, with some justification, make people **fear** revolution. The ideology of the ruling group changed only superficially and the psychology of the people changed not at all.

Let's begin identifying some of the elements which lead people to support, or at least acquiesce, in the status quo. First, there's a sense of futility. People may see society as unjust, but the rich and powerful have always ruled. And the rest of the people are never going to get their shit sufficiently together to do anything about it. For other individuals, it may be a question of feeling that greed is at the root of society's problems, that it's in the nature of human beings to be competitive and that the best we can hope for is a relatively benevolent state to protect the majority from the excesses of a minority (for some, criminals and anarchists; for others, unscrupulous businessmen). Still others may embrace society as the "best of all possible worlds", providing a majority of the population with a high standard of affluence and personal liberty, and allowing people with initiative to rise to the top. All of these views contain particles of truth, which is why they're so difficult to refute. But, more importantly, the fact that no large-scale successful alternatives exist further contributes to the prevailing cynicism.

The positions described above represent a few of the aspects of the prevailing **ideological** consensus. This ideological consensus has two components: possibility and causality. That is, if one is to challenge the prevailing ideology, one must pose empirically the **possibility** of social change, and one must offer an alternative explanation of why things happen other than the usual explanations pertaining to human nature, divine intervention and so on.

In addition to fighting dominant notions of truth, we also have to confront people's ideas about what's worth living for, about the quality of life. In our society, people have been conditioned to want prestigious consumer items and statusy, high-paying jobs. It can be argued that these desires are merely a perverted expression of something more basic. Underneath all the crap, what people really want (and some people realize this in



a fleeting way) is to control their own destinies (as in self-managed work), to engage in socially useful labour, to have fulfilling leisure time\*, to be a valued



and respected member of a close-knit community, to have one's opinion count, to feel one can change the world one is a part of. Our society denies people all these things, and, because of this (and because they've had their own needs obscured), they seek substitutes. Having embraced these false needs and desires, people see their interests as being bound up with technological society (and the conquest of nature), with the dominance of the West vis-a-vis the peoples of the Third World, with the hegemony of the multinational corporations.

We are dealing here with another layer of consensus — a consensus of values. Publications like **Kick It Over** and **Fifth Estate** have consistently attacked the values of the dominant order and suggested alternatives. But our distribution is, of course, tiny and no way has been found of approaching the great majority on whose acquiescence the system rests. Further, as was mentioned earlier, people are often cynical about the prospects for change. They are thus confronted with a world where living their values (beyond a very restricted sphere) is impossible and, as a result, many people give up and adapt. So, two problems are posed: how to strike a chord amongst the population as a whole, and how to promote spheres of action where living in accordance with one's values is actually possible.

\* the whole split between work and leisure is one of the characteristics of our society.

Another way in which social consensus is achieved is through our daily acts. We patronize banks, buy from supermarkets, work for multinationals, pay taxes and rely on police and fire departments when we're in an emergency. In the absence of alternative structures, a radical critique remains largely a head trip. We need to build the kind of alternative institutions which permit people to detach themselves from the crushing grip of capitalism.

The final layer is symbolic. People meditate their experience through symbols and images. In our society, the dominant images are created by advertising and the mass media — images of gender (as defined by society), of consumption, of sandblasted brick in suburbia, and so on. By defining the limits of our imaginative universe, these images and symbols limit our humanity. It's absolutely essential to counteract them. New music, new art, new fashion — all these and more are part of transcending the consensus of symbols imposed by the status quo.

From my vantage point, a coherent programme must take into account the way people's thinking changes, it must take into account some basic principles of mental functioning. There are at least four of these worth making mention of here. Two of them will be familiar to people who have read Freud. The first of these, the **reality principle**, says that people adjust their expectations to their life experience. Faced with a conflict between our desires and social reality, we often lower our horizons. If we had to live constantly on the razor's edge of conflict between what is and how we'd like things to be, we'd go crazy, and so we adapt.

The second, the **pleasure principle**, is in contradiction to the first. It says that if a particular experience is not satisfying or pleasing, we seek to avoid it. This accounts for people's rebelliousness, for their rejection of social conventions and straitjackets. Unfortunately, once our pleasures are shaped by society and channelled in a particular direction (into a materialistic as opposed to a spiritual direction), they become supports for the status quo, and we become afraid of having them taken away.

The third I term the "necessity principle". It's a manifestation of the "sour grapes" syndrome. If we can't have something, then we don't want it. Traditionally, faced with lives of toil and suffering, the working classes have often adopted a rather puritanical outlook, viewing their rulers as "sensual" and decadent. The fourth, the **morality principle**, says that when an injustice no longer seems necessary, its eradication seems particularly urgent. When there's nothing you can do about suffering — your own or that of others — you tend to accept it. When it suddenly seems futile and unnecessary, people press for its removal.

The theoretical, philosophical, practical and artistic aspects of a programme can be related back to these principles of mental functioning. Theory, whether on a popular or sophisticated level, challenges the necessity and legitimacy of prevailing "reality" by citing alternatives and offering explanations for why things have evolved in a particular direction. Philosophy discloses





the real consequences of our materialistic lifestyle and shows how many of the things which we value in a privatistic way are being destroyed by the system we think we support. For instance, many rural people still value community, decentralized structures, a slower pace of life, human warmth, mutual aid, etc. and yet they are conned into voting for conservative politicians who are helping to usher in exactly the opposite. Part of the problem is that radicals spend far too much time focussing on what they're against, and not enough on what they're for. Believe it or not, many people share values similar to ours — they just haven't articulated them in a clear political or philosophical way. We need to tap into these on as broad a scale as possible.

The practical alternative-building process, by creating real opportunities for acting in a moral fashion, makes such action seem imperative, and the artistic revolution raises our horizons of possibility, validating who we are (the dominant images only validate us if we're clones of the system), challenging a lot of the character traits that get bred into us by an often hostile and disappointing world, and releasing our capacity to dream. I obviously don't have space here to go into detail about what such a programme would look like (unfortunately, no such detailed programme exists), but there are a few things which are being done in Toronto and elsewhere in a piecemeal way which can be done everywhere:

- Infiltrate academia and insert new paradigms, new ways of looking at the world, into traditional disciplines; challenge the parameters of scholarly discussion;
- Engage in popular educational work around some of the common beliefs cited in this article. Little successful experiences exist in this regard, at least in North America. In Canada, a book called **Getting Started** has been written (Between the Lines Press, Toronto) which, despite some grievous faults, attempts to serve as a primer for such work;
- Launch a systematic campaign of "detourning" the images and values of the mass media — deface billboards and subway ads by altering their images and

slogans, disclosing the social reality behind the veil of appearance. Short, readable posters with facts about corporate responsibility for environmental degradation, political exposes, the nuts and bolts of sexism, racism and imperialism are extremely useful as well. In Toronto many people spraypaint creative, non-dogmatic slogans which show the absurdity of capitalist economics and politics;

- Research the successes and failures, from a practical and ethical standpoint, of various strategies for building an alternative society — coops, small businesses, barter, Green dollars, etc. — and develop a plan of action for building an alternative economy;
- Open bookstores, cafes and Free Universities to stimulate debate and discussion. Start your own magazine;
- Create art, music, fashion which embody the values, vision and character traits of our preferred world, which validate us and our aspirations;
- Build community movements which seek to make over local and municipal institutions into vehicles for local self-determination. Voting and running for office can be a good thing in this context if they occur in conjunction with efforts to democratize these institutions from the outside — for instance, getting by-laws passed making neighborhoods the ultimate locus of authority. This is easier to do in a small community than in a large.

What I'm essentially saying is that we need to pursue the evolutionary and revolutionary strategies simultaneously — groping piecemeal toward a gradual modification of existing structures while at the same time deepening our critique of the whole status quo. In practice, these two perspectives will often seem at loggerheads, but both are equally necessary. Only in this way, will it be possible to undo the knots which bind people fast to the status quo. □





## THOUGHTS ON ANARCHIST STRATEGY

"...a society which organizes itself without authority is always in existence like a seed beneath the snow."

— Colin Ward

"[Anarchism is] the actualization and reconstitution of something that has always been present, which exists alongside the state, albeit buried and laid waste." — Gustave Landauer

"A free society cannot be the substitution of a 'new order' for the old order; it is the extension of spheres of free action until they make up most of social life." — Paul Goodman

"Tyrannicide is **practical** only when tyranny has a single head, or at most a small number of heads. When it is a hydra, only the Revolution can kill it." — Louise Michel

"The well-travelled roads that exist now, there's nothing progressive about them .... It's a question of thinking up new forms.

"For me... [it's] a question of creating human values which [do] not exist in capitalism, in all of Europe, in all of Western culture — [they've] been cleared away by the machine. That's what it's about: to discover... unfold... and ... create them anew. In that way ... you carry the torch again, you become the bearer of a new society .... And you'll be better doing that than bombing it in creating the same rigid figures of hatred at the end." — Bommi Baumann

"I don't think an idea which most people in our

society don't understand can be successfully implemented as a result of a military struggle with the government. I don't see how anarchism can result from a sudden, violent revolution unless you have an anarchist version of the *Cheka* (Russian bad-guy political police) making sure no one is hiring laborers, selling commodities, or organizing governments. I don't think we can rely on the natural instincts of the workers to choose anarchy, and I don't think anarchy can work among people who were just recently living in a totally different way, with different values and different strategies for coping. I don't think advocates of revolution now appreciate the human suffering and the barbarism involved in trying to impose an alien idea on an unenthusiastic population. If you try to impose something on people (or try to take away something they're mentally addicted to) it doesn't matter how wonderful your idea is — people will hate it. This is why communism doesn't work. People must want change very badly to enthusiastically try something new, and they have to feel they make this choice freely.

"A revolution would result in dozens of political groups trying to force everyone to adopt their point of view. Usually the most demagogic, ruthless, and authoritarian group prevails since they are best able to gain support and least hesitant to do what is necessary to attain power over others. Since revolutionary periods are very unstable ones, people won't be inclined to try anarchism. I think they would swallow lies and choose despotic order over anarchic freedom." — E.S. in the magazine *The Gentle Anarchist* (P.O. Box 1313, Lawrence, Kansas, 66044-8313). □

Anyone interested in a large find of photographs taken of the Mexican Revolution, contact:

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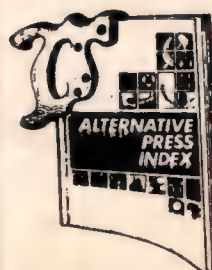
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# "HEY, WE REALLY ARE EVERYWHERE!" Fruit Shopping at the I.G.A.

by Kenn Quayle

Bureaucracy, Babble-dy, Bullshit. What else would you expect at a conference of the calibre of the U.N.? Groups and individuals from 18 countries gathered in Toronto for a week-long rap session. Canada, U.S.A., all across Europe, Peru, Brazil, Australia, and New Zealand. Some very important people representing some rather respectable organizations. And, thankfully, some happy humans as well.

The seventh annual International Gay Association conference took place here, at the traditional Native "meeting place"\* during the first week of July. The whole experience took me completely by surprise. My friend Michael had been working with the organizing committee over the last couple of months at a break-neck, caffeine abusing pace while I was running around the country on tour with K.Y.T.E.S. theatre troupe. (I was lucky enough to receive part of a government grant designed to help disillusioned youth to find their way back into the work-force through theatre. What we did was slightly different. We created our own play and took our own political and personal messages on tour to group homes, community centres, and prisons — including the Kingston Women's Penitentiary. The government was nice enough to pay for it all.) I got back in time for Michael to fill me in on all the newest IGA dirt and scandals, which only served to make me think "I'm sure glad I didn't get involved with the organizing of the conference. I knew it was going to be like this."

If you read "Macho Disco Tendencies..." in the last issue of KIO, you'll have a fairly accurate view of the GWM (Gay White Male) community here in Toronto (in North America?). Accurate at least from the point of view of someone with funny ideas about politics and/or hair colour. Much of my experience with the Gay community has been dealing with Yuppie Clones telling me to tone it down, and that I'm a shame and a disgrace to Gay men. I'm not bitterly disappointed when Gay bars turn me away at the door, because their music sucks, and most of the people look and think the same as King+Bay businessmen. Perhaps I'm being overly harsh, but it is upsetting to think that men in skirts and make-up can only go to straight clubs. "Militant Drag-Queens of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your respectability." Or your community-identity.

One thing "Macho-Disco Tendencies..." in its eternally pessimistic tone, failed to mention is that there is an alternative. I've allowed myself to be publicly labelled as Gay for five years now, and it took less than one of those years to realize that the bar scene is not for me. There are a huge number of "out" Gay people who

don't identify with the disco-clone bars, and recently we've begun finding each other and living outside of the lifestyle that bores us. Most of us are new at the pioneer lifestyle, so we still make mistakes and get lost, but I refuse to spend my life pouting because the rich fags don't like the same music as me. I prefer to yell at them. Constantly.

Anyway, the conference. I expected the IGA to represent boring middle-class white male values, and I went to the opening session prepared for a sore throat and headache. I had enjoyed myself thoroughly the previous day at the Gay Pride celebrations, even though that evening I was denied entrance to a gay bar — again.

I had no idea of what was going on within the IGA. I thought "international = lobbying = compromise." I was positive that it also meant well-established structure and hierarchy. I didn't expect to be taken seriously at all. I had never been to any conference before, and I'd never heard the word "plenary," but I went to it anyway. I found out that "plenary" means a chance to listen and be listened to.

For the first couple of days, people doubted the enthusiasm, but they were willing to talk about it. After some time, people began to understand that ELF (Everything Liberation front) was more than just a name, and when we talked about Central America, or South Africa, or racism or sexism, we knew something about the issues. It's not just the 35-year-old life-time revolutionaries who have the capacity to seriously deal with more than one issue at a time.

My suggestion for a workshop on Lesbians and Gays in prostitution, prisons and psychiatric institutions, and male rape was taken quite seriously, and I was asked to facilitate it. I felt like I was just as important as everyone else, including the people who had faithfully gone to every conference for the last five years.

I learned about efficient organization. There were some real problems with the structure of the conference. The bureaucracy got in the way of human communication from time to time, but was also quick to amend the situation. Everyone realized that the purpose of having this international conference was to let us have a chance to talk with our sisters and brothers from around the world. The structure that was present only served as an agenda for all the topics the individuals brought with them. Never was it forgotten that we as Lesbians and Gay men were gathered together to help each other survive in the various fucked-up situations we all have to deal with every day.

There were arguments over the big issues. I felt frustration and anger while telling half the room that I felt they were racist in the way they were dealing with the situation of U.S. imperialism in Central America.

\* Toronto means "meeting place" in the Huron language.



Some of the frustration remains, but I realize now how closed our media really is here in Canada. When dealing with issues like apartheid in South Africa, the people from the European countries had a whole different perspective than I did. As a group, it was decided that the IGA could not support the struggles in South Africa and Central America, because as a group, we could not agree that these are also Gay issues. In most cases the IGA makes decisions by consensus. When a vote becomes necessary for a decision to be made, an 80% majority must be had to carry the decision. In both of the issues mentioned above, a vote was taken, but less than 80% supported the IGA taking any action as a group. There were, however, lengthy discussions, and many groups and individuals strengthened their commitment to helping the struggles of revolutionaries in Central America and in South Africa.

One unfortunate thing about the conference was the lack of social events and time for people to get together to talk. There was some, but the workshops began at 9:00 a.m. and continued into the evening every day, so for the most part we were much too exhausted to have serious discussions. I would have been happy to see a few less workshops and more time for personal contact, but the whole experience was mind-blowing anyway.

Apart from the workshop on prisons, etc. that I mentioned before, which resulted in establishing an archive here for information on these topics (if you have any info., or personal experiences in these areas, please contact me through KIO), I also presented two petitions dealing with North American Indian issues. As

Lesbians and Gays we support the struggles of the people at Wollaston Lake in Saskatchewan, and at Big Mountain in Arizona against uranium mining. Along with that goes a statement that the oppression of one is the oppression of all, with a special link between our experiences as Lesbians and Gay men, and those of Native people and their Berdache traditions. Berdache is a special role given to homosexuals or transsexuals within traditional Native spirituality.

We also found out at the conference that a fascist-run newspaper in Brazil is calling for the death penalty for homosexuals. In New Zealand, the present law gives seven years in jail for Gay men. An attempt to introduce a bill to change that law has been challenged severely by the Salvation Army, supported heavily by American right-wing church groups. In a country of 3 million people the Sally Ann has managed to collect 750,000 signatures against the new bill, sometimes going as far as asking for death penalties. The petition is being circulated in work places and schools, where children and closeted Gays are pressured into signing.

Situations such as those are the reasons for the existence of the IGA. A protest was held against the Salvation Army during the conference. Now groups who were at the conference can go back to their own communities with information about the rest of the world, and co-ordinate plans of action. This information will be updated throughout the year in the IGA bulletin distributed from Stockholm, Sweden, until next year when people will gather together in Copenhagen, Denmark. □





# A BOOK REVIEW of *My Disillusionment in Russia*

by Jay Moore

On the night of December 21, 1919, the S.S. Buford pulled slowly out of New York harbor. Aboard were 249 politically contagious individuals — anarchists and other foreign-born radicals — rounded-up in the post-war Red Scare. These were the “brains” of the recent anti-war agitation and labor unrest, or so thought the government. The ship’s captain’s sealed orders read: *Proceed to Finland and deport these dangerous undesirables to Soviet Russia.*

Outcast among this newly-stateless group was Emma Goldman. With her was her old friend and comrade, Alexander Berkman. Both Goldman and Berkman had been released a bare few weeks earlier from prison to which they had been sentenced for their loud public agitation against military conscription. Now, they were headed together into what was to become a permanent exile.

Goldman’s feeling at this moment could only have been ambivalent. The U.S. was her residence of 24 years, and it had been the stage for nearly all of her active adult political life. Perhaps more than most emigrants with radical politics, she had conscientiously sought to Americanize herself, to break out of the sequestered enclaves where only Yiddish or Russian was spoken and to adopt her message more closely to the native American idiom. Although constantly reviled by its “better citizens”, frequently denied a place to speak or even in which to lay down her head, America, nevertheless, had become her adopted home.

By birth, Goldman, like Berkman, was a Russian Jew. Her parents came from the district of Kovno in present-day Lithuania, then near the Russian-German border. As a teenager, she had moved with her family to St. Petersburg, the glittering capital of the Czarist Empire. Then, along with members of her own family, she had come to the United States in search of a better life.

Yet now it was Russia which seemed to represent the New World while the turmoil of capitalist America was fading into the past. Two years previously, the long-anticipated Revolution had swept away the hated Czar and his cabinet of Ministers. A second Revolution had overturned the hapless, middle-of-the-road Kerensky regime in the name of power for the workers and peasants. The new government was headed by Lenin’s Bolsheviks, with a Left-wing faction of the Socialist Revolutionary Party as the Bolsheviks’ junior coalition partner.

Now, freed by the force of circumstances from any obligation to the American movement, Goldman could look ahead with some eagerness to what lay at the end of the trans-Atlantic voyage. There in Russia indeed was a Revolution, not just talk, but a real Revolution — under attack to be sure — but alive and breathing fire at the imperialists, the war-mongers and all enemies of the people:

*At last I was bound for Russia and all else was*

*blotted out. I would behold with mine own eyes Matushka Rossiya, the land freed from political and economic masters; the Russia dubinushka, as the peasant was called, raised from the dust; the Russian worker, the modern Samson, who with a sweep of his mighty arm had pulled down the pillars of decaying society. The twenty-eight days on our floating prison passed in a sort of trance. I was hardly conscious of my surroundings.*



Goldman’s book was written in 1922. Later, following Trotsky’s expulsion from the Soviet leadership — and again at the time of Nikita Krushchev’s “Secret Speech” unveiling the not-very-secret iniquities of Joseph Djugashvili (Stalin), disillusionment epics were to become a sort of retirement industry for ex-Communists and the bedraggled sympathizers of the Soviet “experiment”. *My Disillusionment in Russia* can be said to be the first — and the best — of this genre. The difference is that Emma Goldman, unlike many others, had the mettle to remain throughout a committed revolutionary. Unlike many others, she never became a right-winger — a common fate of the disillusioned. Although favorably disposed towards the Bolsheviks at the beginning, she was an anarchist and not a Marxist. Because anarchists had long predicted how Marxists in power might behave, she was not the victim of surprise and was able to keep her political balance.

Petrograd (postwar St. Petersburg) Emma Goldman found to be a quite different place than she remembered. The city seemed lifeless and desolate, its population demoralized and faced with shortages of food, fuel, and other basic necessities. Much of this could be



attributed to the effects of the Civil War which currently gripped Russia as counter-revolutionary armies led by Czarist officers tried, with foreign backing, to unseat the weak revolutionary government. A foreign quarantine made trade and contacts difficult.

In 1918, American Troops had landed on Soviet soil at Murmansk and Archangel on the Arctic Ocean north of Petrograd and at the key Pacific port of Vladivostok in Siberia. British, French, Canadians, Serbians, Japanese, and Italians also took a direct role in the Allied intervention. The Revolution was surrounded by enemies.

Goldman's host in Petrograd, middle-level functionaries in the Bolshevik party apparatus, impressed her as sincere people. Soon, however, she had a meeting with Petrograd's anarchists. From them, she heard bitter tales about how the Bolshevik commissars had betrayed the open, free, and spontaneous nature of the Revolution.

Although opposed to the state as a matter of principle, many Russian anarchists had initially offered their critical support to the Bolshevik government — threatened as it was by foreign imperialism and Russian reaction. Some, like Emma Goldman's former Chicago friend, Bill Shatov, had accepted work as part of the war effort or economic reconstruction with the Soviet Government.

Then, on March 3, 1918, the Bolsheviks had signed the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with Germany. This effectively ended Russia's participation in the war but ceded large parts of Russian territory to the advancing German army. Lenin saw this as granting a necessary breathing space for the Revolution. To the anarchists, and to the Bolshevik's erstwhile allies the Left Social Revolutionaries, this act was an unconscionable betrayal of revolutionary principles — a sell-out to militaristic Germany. It turned over, to the enemy, the Ukraine, the strongest base area of both the anarchists and Social Revolutionaries.

To end the irritating anarchist propaganda against the treaty and to consolidate their own control of the trade-unions, the Bolshevik secret police, the Cheka, raided anarchist clubs and offices in Moscow and Petrograd. Most anarchist newspapers were suppressed. In the fighting, many were killed and hundreds of anarchists were thrown into prison.

Emma Goldman listened to the stories of Red Terror. She heard about Nestor Makhno, the Ukrainian peasant anarchist who had cooperated with the Bolsheviks and whose guerrilla army had valiantly defended the Revolution from the Whites (the equivalent of the Nicaraguan "Contras"). Now, the Bolsheviks were trying treacherously to annihilate the Makhnovist Movement whose members they denigrated as "bandits".

Even worse than her own experiences in capitalist America, the anarchists were now forced to meet and deliver their information in secret. Her mind, as she recounted later, was filled with turmoil. But, newly landed in revolutionary Russia, she sorely wanted to believe differently. "Everything in me," she said, "cried out against this indictment." Before leaving the

United States, she had criticized anarchists and Russian exiles for being overly harsh.

The Bolsheviks, Goldman knew, were Marxists and, as such, believers in the salubrious effects of all-around political and economic centralization, which Marxists have identified with the mainstream of modern progress. Goldman knew well the old debates between Marx and Bakunin. She agreed with Marx's anarchist respondent that progress, if it meant anything, meant the expansion of liberty and solidarity.

However, to Goldman, life in all its creative variety was far more important and meaningful than the too narrow interpretation of any one theory. She had defended the Bolsheviks as embodying in practice, if imperfectly, the guiding spirit of the Revolution. Because of this, she felt, even they had been forced to modify their own application of traditional Marxist doctrine, which did not accept the possibility of a socialist revolution in an economically-backward country such as Russia was at the time. They seemed, under Lenin, to have moved to a position closer to that of the anarchists, in which revolution was not seen as economic in nature but as an act of will on the part of the oppressed.

Not wanting, she decided, to say anything that would seem to help the counter-revolutionaries and the foreign intervention, she made up her mind to wait and study matters further. In any case, great events were happening in Russia, and she had come not to stand on the sidelines but to serve and get involved. To Lenin, whom she met, along with other ranking Bolshevik leaders, she volunteered her services. After several unsatisfactory attempts, an appointment with the Museum of the Revolution answered her desire for serious but non-partisan work. Furthermore, this enabled her as a member of a team collecting documentary materials to travel widely on a special pass and in a special railway car. This way, she could find out the truth first-hand apart from the dependency on government-sponsored propaganda.

The special privileges troubled Emma. She was disturbed to see special accommodations for herself and Party members, who also tended to eat better than the ordinary population. (Lenin had denounced as deviationist his comrades who favored a more egalitarian system of sharing amidst the widespread privation. The work of the Communists was too important. They must have sleep and good nourishment.)

What Emma saw were the very early roots of the *nomenclatura* which determines by assignment of status and rank who gets what — the limousine or the imported delicacies or the dacha by the seaside — in contemporary Soviet society.

The Smolny, the Bolshevik general headquarters in Petrograd, had three separate dining rooms. One prepared food for the important members of the Bolshevik-controlled Petrograd Soviet and the dignitaries of the Communist International. The other two restaurants were for ordinary party employees and office-workers. Goldman saw hope in the story of how some Kronstadt sailors had discovered this less-than-equal situation. *En*



masse they came to close down two of the restaurants. It was not to see this kind of thing that they had helped — they were a major help — to make the Revolution.

In the city of Kharkov, Goldman was able to visit a Soviet prison. The appalling conditions were a shock even to her who had seen many jails and prisons. Inside, she met an imprisoned anarchist. (Lenin had claimed that there were no “ideological anarchists” in Soviet prisons, only terrorists.) The evidence of Red Terror in many places Goldman went was painfully evident — sudden night-time disappearances, executions at dawn, the hostage-taking by the Cheka of the family members of enemy leaders.

The White counter-revolutionaries were committing numerous atrocities against suspected Bolsheviks. Yet, Goldman ruminated, “If the Revolution really had to support so much brutality and crime, what was the purpose of the Revolution after all?” Must the Revolution behave like its enemies?

Our increasingly dismayed museum worker found that the Bolsheviks were at least partly to blame for the collapsed economy. The need of the Soviet bureaucracy to know and to control everything had gone, in a few short years, to the outermost limits of absurdity. Petrograd in winter had a shortage of heating fuel. Why not let the workers go to the countryside to hunt for wood or to make deals with the peasants? “No,” said Petrograd Party boss Zinoviev, “It would interfere with our plan of nationalized and centralized control.” Little wonder that shortly thereafter the Petrograd proletariat was to go on strike against the supposed “workers’ government”.

The new Soviet system of education was supposed to be one of its strong-points. Its accomplishments were soon to be hailed by “first-hand witnesses” like Scott Nearing, who was impelled in 1926 to write a glowing book about it. Indeed, to the casual observer, as Goldman remarks in *My Disillusionment*, in this one area it would certainly appear that the Bolsheviks had accomplished wonders. A large-scale adult literacy campaign had been conducted, and schools were beginning to become accessible for the first time to children of working-class or peasant origins. This was all to the good.

But Goldman found no flowering of the critical spirit or free inquiry in the classrooms she visited. To an anarchist, these factors were essential. Rather to the

Bolsheviks, it appeared that the educational system was a means for indoctrinating ever broader numbers of people with Marxism — in Goldman’s words, the “new state religion” — and inculcating respect for the new Soviet leadership.

The Bolsheviks had put an end, in the areas under their control, to pogroms and the other glaring manifestations of anti-Semitism. They spoke, in international forums, on behalf of the equality of nations. Yet, for those Jews who did not want to be a part of the Revolution but who wanted simply to have their own form of cultural autonomy, the Bolsheviks, E.G. observed, were not making it any easier. There was pressure instead on Jews to join the Revolution, as the Bolsheviks defined it.

Less and less as she criss-crossed Russia, talking to Russians from all categories, was Emma able to find justification for what she saw and heard. For a person of her character, self-deception was impossible. Unhappy and not wanting to act any more in a semi-official capacity, she resigned her Museum appointment.

Her mistake, she now felt, had been to confuse the Bolsheviks — only one particular party — with the Revolution. This was a myth that the Bolsheviks themselves had sought to foster by skillfully appropriating as their own such popular revolutionary slogans as “Land to the Tiller” and “All Power to the Soviets”. Nevertheless the two — the Bolsheviks and the Revolution — were by no means synonymous. Her point is worth quoting at length because of its modern-day relevance:

*I longed to close my eyes and ears — not to see the accusing hand which pointed to the blind errors and conscious crimes that were stifling the Revolution. I wanted to hear the compelling voice of facts, which no personal attachments could silence any longer. I knew that the Revolution and the Bolsheviks, proclaimed as one and the same, were opposites, antagonistic in aim and purpose. The Revolution had its roots deep down in the life of the people. The Communist State was based on a scheme forcibly applied by a political party. In the contest the Revolution was being slain, but the slayer also gasped for breath. I had known in America that the Interventionists, the blockade and the conspiracy of the Imperialists were*





wrecking the Revolution. But what I had not known then was the part the Bolsheviks were playing in the process. Now I realized that they were the gravediggers.

For Goldman, the ultimate straw was the Bolsheviks' violent suppression of the Kronstadt uprising. In March 1921, the sailors of the Kronstadt naval base in the Gulf of Finland off Petrograd rebelled demanding a "Third Revolution". The First Revolution had been against the Czar. The Second was against Kerensky. The Third, the sailors said, would be against the Bolshevik commissars in order to restore a true Soviet democracy. The sailors supported the striking Petrograd factory workers. Additionally, they called for freedom of speech, the freedom to organize independently, and the release of political prisoners.

By this time, The Civil War launched against the Revolution by the open counter-revolutionaries and the foreign intervention, had ended. Yet, no lightening-up was to happen in Bolshevik policy, as might possibly have been expected if the exigencies of wartime had really been responsible for the plethora of Bolshevik human rights violations and the ill-treatment of non-Bolshevik groups and parties. (Lenin had told Emma Goldman in their earlier interview that freedom of speech was "a bourgeois luxury" under existing conditions.) The Bolsheviks could tolerate no threat to their monopoly of power. Despite the efforts of Goldman and Alexander Berkman to mediate the conflict, the rebelling sailors in Kronstadt were brutally crushed by the loyal sections of the Red Army. For Goldman and Berkman, this was the definitive end of the Revolution.

At the time when the Communist International and the congress of the Red Trade Union International were convening in Moscow — June 1921, imprisoned Russian anarchists launched a hunger strike to focus world attention on their plight. Goldman and Berkman formed an outside committee. Fearing a potentially embarrassing situation in front of visiting foreign delegations, including the American IWW, Lenin agreed to have some jailed anarchists deported. They were, Lenin said, too dangerous to remain in Russia.

Others were not so lucky. In September 1921, the Cheka in Moscow shot ten people accused of "anarchist banditism". One was the well-regarded anarchist poet Lev Chernyi and another was Fanya Baron, a courageous young woman whom Goldman had known and befriended in America.

As Goldman said, "To remain longer in Bolshevik Russia had become unbearable." In December 1921, two years more or less after they had arrived looking for a safe political haven, both Goldman and Berkman departed from Russia. Next was yet another lonely exile in Europe and Canada. Thereafter, much of her time would be spent in aiding Russian refugees and in attempting to pry others loose from the Bolsheviks' clutches. She felt a strong sense of betrayal. Unlike many others, however, she kept her vision constantly on the future, and described her response as a return to first principles.

At this time, visitors in some numbers had started to

arrive in Soviet Russia from the West. In *My Disillusionment*, Goldman reserves a large measure of scorn for those people who, following a visit of one or two week's duration, not knowing the Russian language, totally dependent on the official tour services for what they saw and experienced, nevertheless returned home to lecture knowingly and approvingly on the "Soviet experiment". These people, Goldman says, always looked for extenuating circumstances. They rarely admitted the full truth of what they had seen. If they had noticed human rights violations in their own countries, they would have been among the first to protest. But not in Russia; the same standards did not apply.

Then there were those whom Emma calls the "travelling salesmen of the Revolution". These visitors came to know well enough what was really going on in Russia, but they preferred not just to bend the truth but to lie about it quite consciously. They accepted the hideous Bolshevik proposition that ends could be separated from means, and the great good said to lie at the end of the revolutionary rainbow justified all manner of intervening "excesses" and crimes.

*My Disillusionment in Russia* is unfortunately out of print. It is a valuable book after all these years and utterly worth reading, both for those who have an interest in revolutionary history and for those who are pondering the meaning of current events. We can truly learn a lot from it.

An interesting measuring stick might be: If Emma Goldman were alive today, what would she think?

#### Other Sources

*Paul Avrich, The Russian Anarchists.*  
*Alexander Berkman, The Bolshevik Myth: (Diary, 1920-1922).*  
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*Emma Goldman, Living My Life.*  
*Voline, The Unknown Revolution.*  
*Alice Wexler, Emma Goldman.* □



Emma Goldman



# Mind



# theatre



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One



Yes, you stand so strong and pure and right. But do you ever find time for the injured?



Two

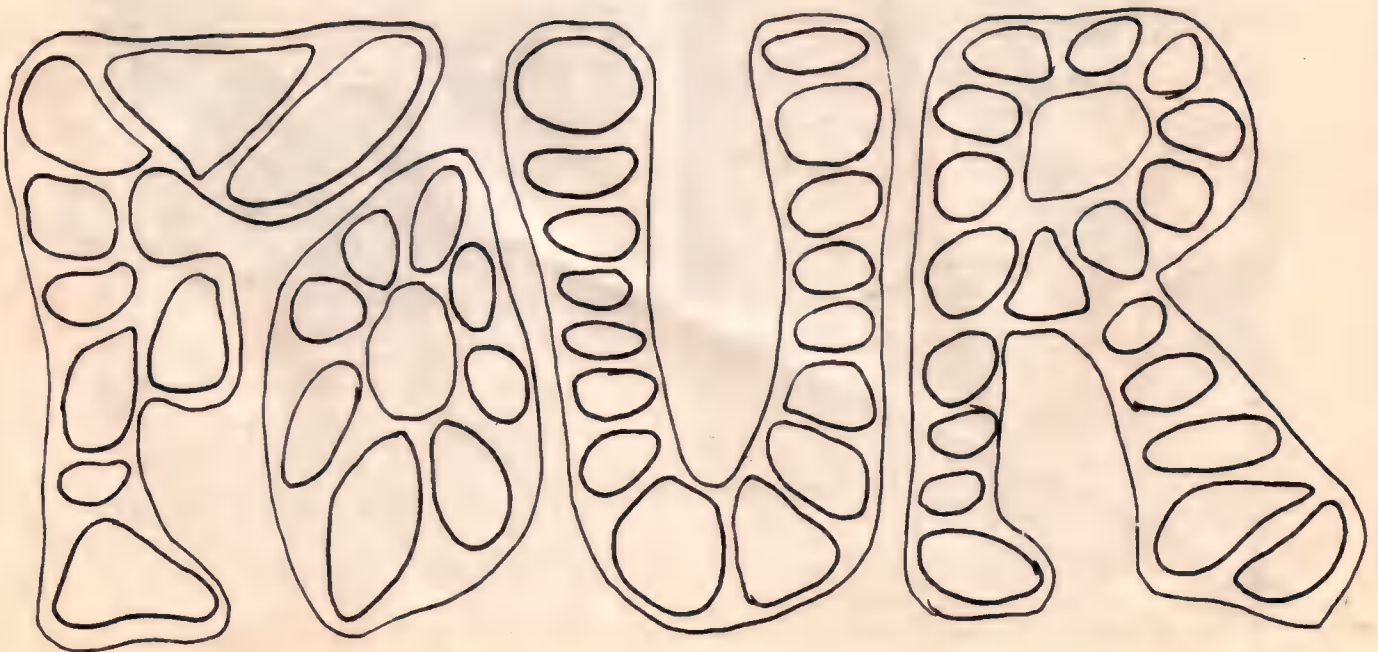


Three

at times i would see an odd man in the park. he spoke to himself constantly and collected objects that he found.

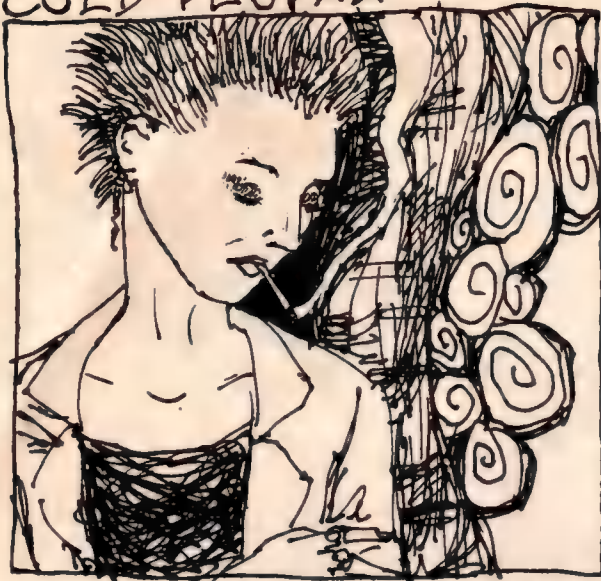


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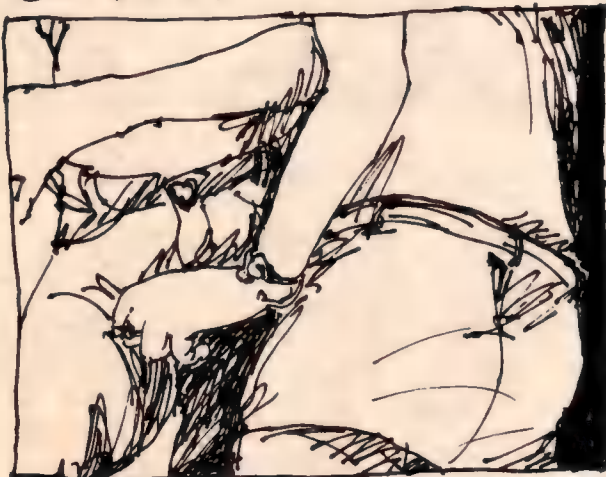




# COLD PEOPLE



WHEN YOU'RE SO LONELY  
THAT YOU GET COLD  
AND YOU GO LOOKING  
FOR SOMETHING WARM,  
ALL YOU FIND IS  
COLD PEOPLE -  
ALL YOU GET IS  
COLDER



LOOK FOR SOME WARMTH  
TRYING TO MAKE SOME HEAT  
BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING  
TO GET ANYTHING  
FROM ANOTHER  
COLD PERSON.

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COLD MEN AND  
COLD WOMEN  
ALL THIS FRICTION -  
BUT YOU'LL STILL DIE COLD.

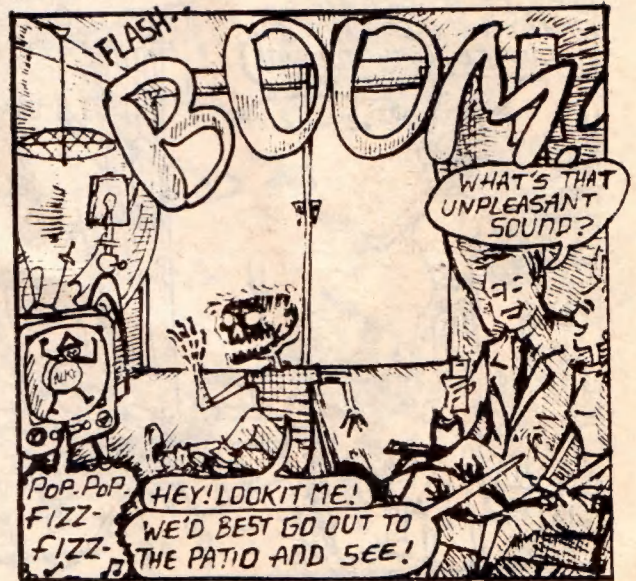
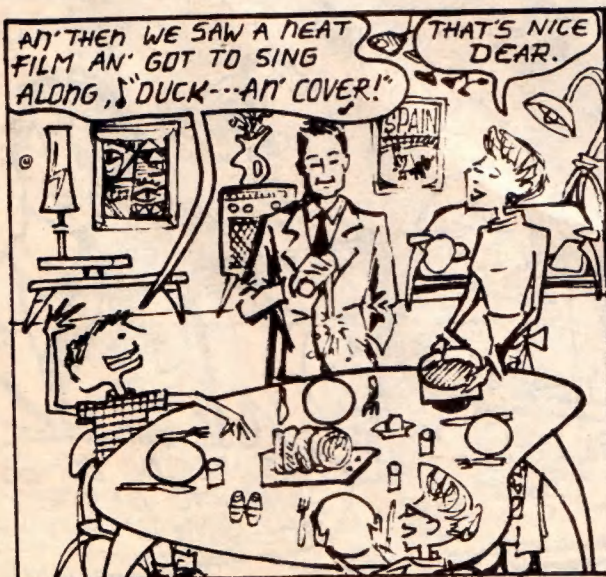
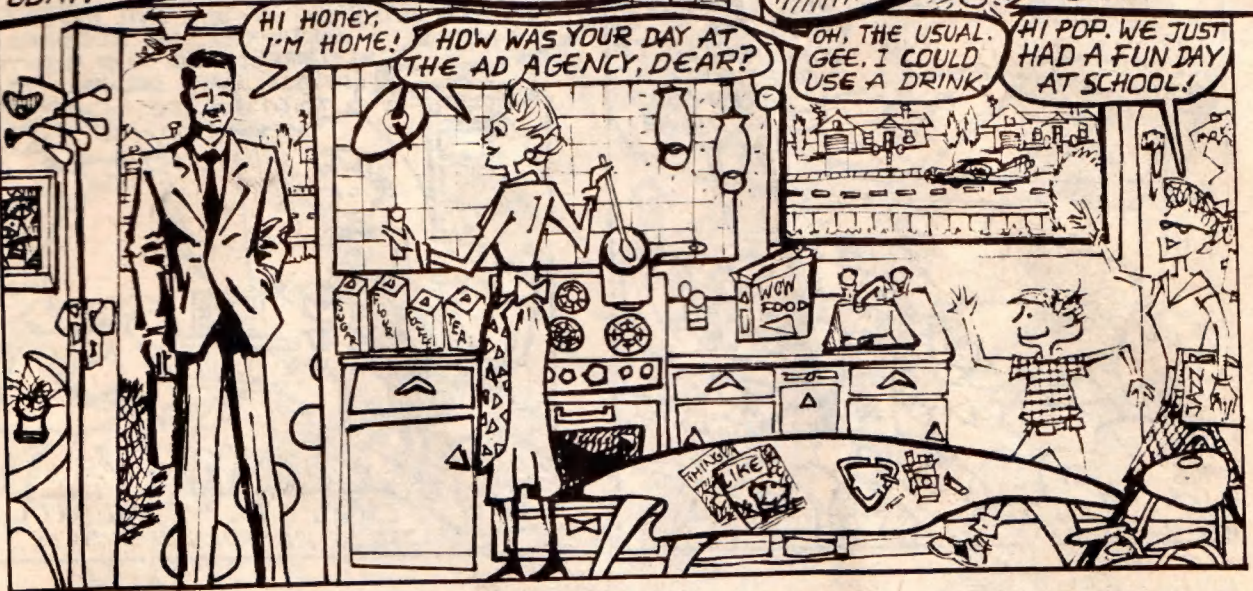


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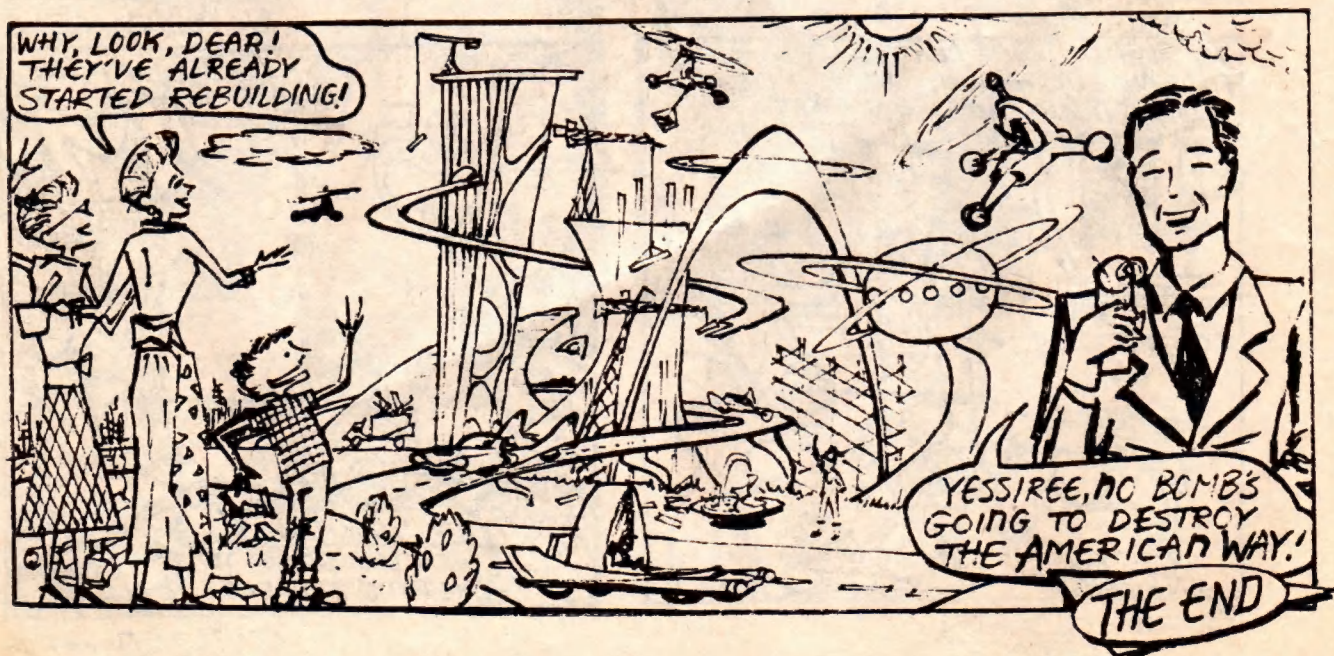
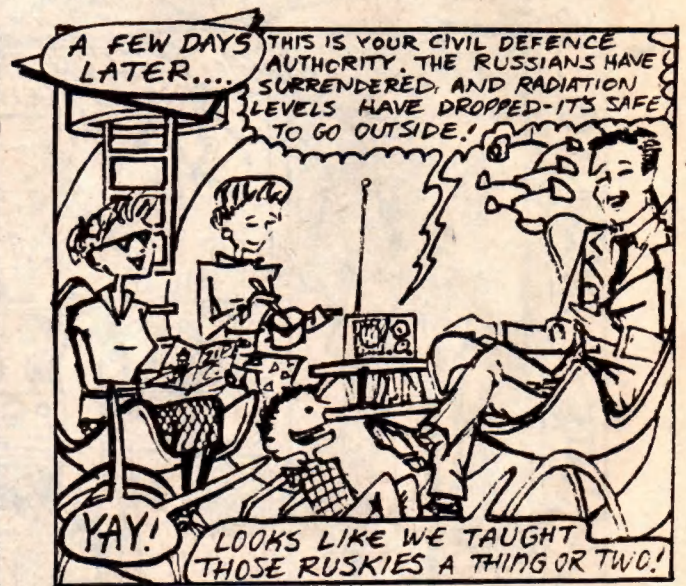
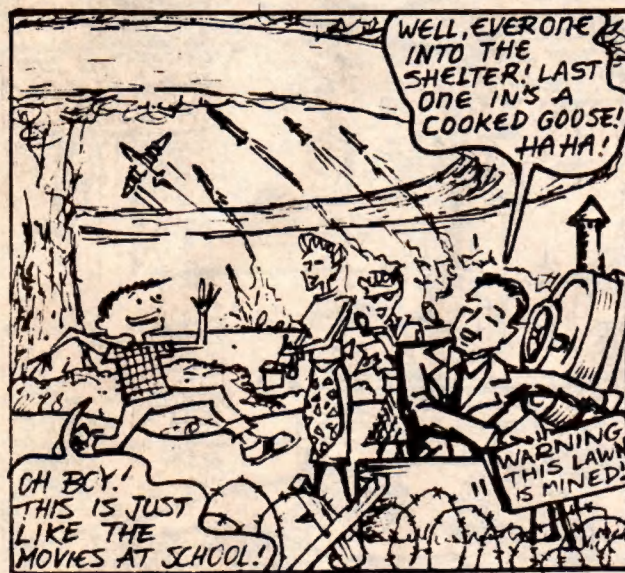
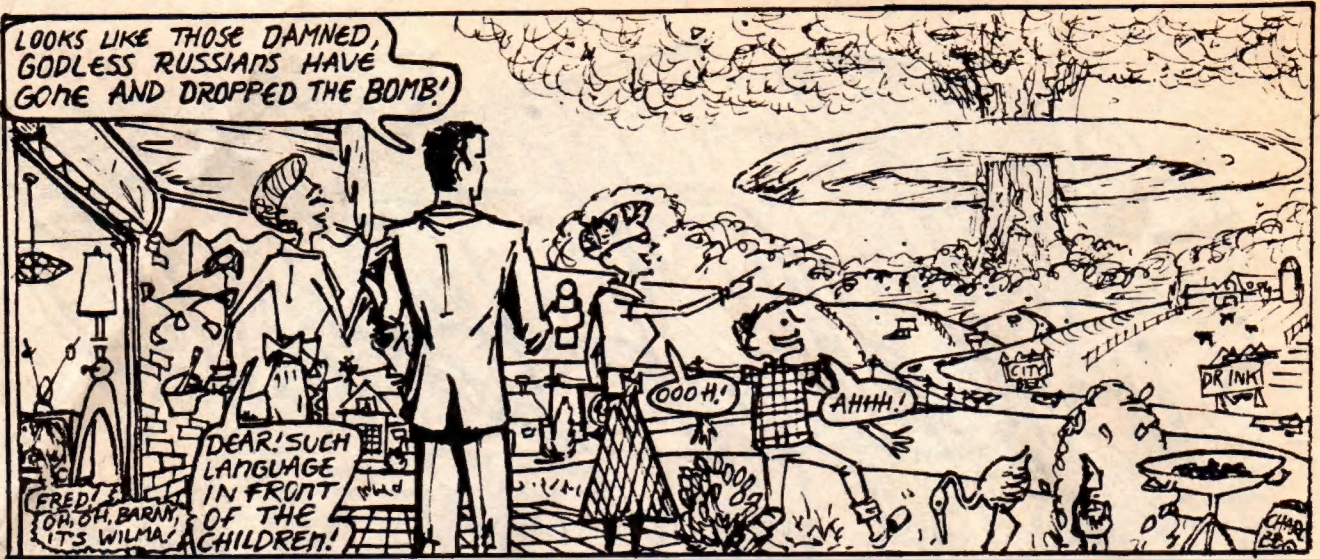
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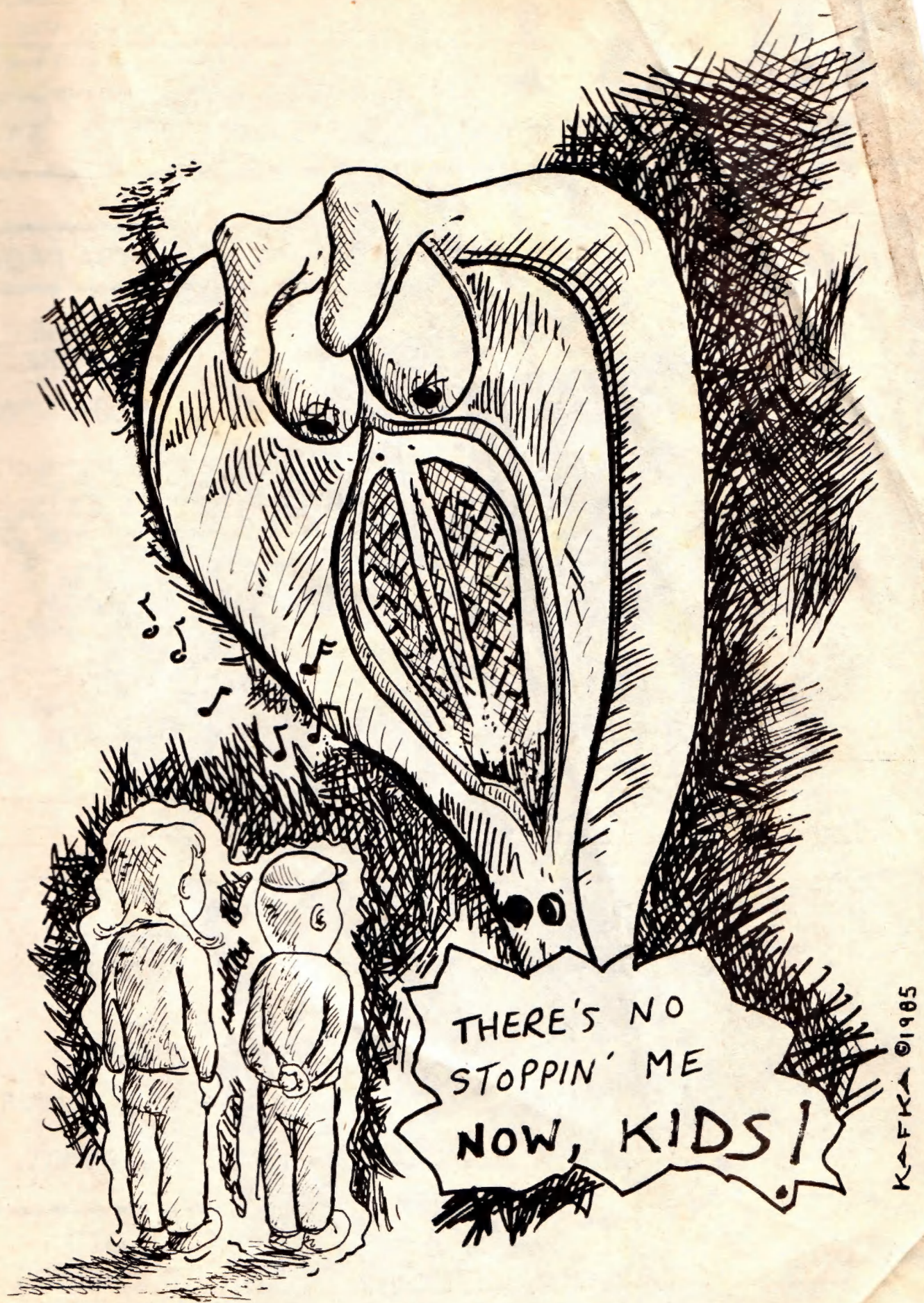
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